Psychology & Its Role in Spirituality

FERDINAND WULLIEMIER

Non fiction Gift Aid
£
0 031140 010710

Psychology & Its Role in Spirituality

Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari with the author

Psychology & Its Role in Spirituality

FERDINAND WULLIEMIER

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

Shri Ram Chandra Mission
Post Office Box 269
Molena, GA 30258

http://www.srcm.org/srcm/

© 1996 by Shri Ram Chandra Mission (a non-profit California corporation). No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission in writing from Shri Ram Chandra Mission. All rights reserved.
First Edition: December, 1996
Printed in U.S.A.

04 03 02 01 00 99 98 97 96 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-945242-33-6

CONTENTS

Foreword vii
Preface ix
Acknowledgments xi

PART ONE
Psychologies and Sahaj Marg Psychology

Introduction: Taking Psychology Into Consideration in the Sahaj Marg System 3

Methodology Applied to this Study 9

1. A Review of Western and Eastern Psychology 13
2. Five Basic Characteristics of Sahaj Marg Psychology 29
3. Some Useful Roles of Psychology in Spirituality 61
4. Psychiatric Emergencies and Spiritual Practice: Their Management and Prevention 95
5. Research 127
6. Conclusion of the First Part 131
7. Master Answers 135

PART TWO
Considerations on the Uses and Misuses of Sahaj Marg

Introduction: Why This Subject Was Chosen 151

8. Method, Mission, Master: Proper Uses and Misuses 157
9. Proper Use and Misuses of the Method 161
10. Proper Use and Misuses of the Mission 175

11. The Use and Misuse of Preceptors 203
12. From the Numerous Misuses to the Proper Use of the Master 231
13. Method, Mission, and Master as a Whole 275

Glossary 279
Bibliography 285
About the Author 297

FOREWORD

When someone is first exposed to the ancient disciplines of Indian yoga systems, there is a feeling of exhilaration at the magnificent vistas of spiritual evolution offered to the human being. The Vedas state unambiguously that the mind alone is the cause of the bondage of the human being, as well as being the instrument of his liberation. The use of the human mind for the ultimate purpose of human emancipation is therefore severely logical and practical. This is especially so with the raja yoga of the sage Patanjali, where the mind is used to train itself to accept the mastery of the inner being, called soul or *atman*.

Sahaj Marg, a modified system of raja yoga, tailor-made for the human being of modern times, evokes such awe and wonder in the minds of its practitioners, called abhyasis. On this path of evolution, abhyasis soon realise that one is required to use one's own mind a great deal, not only in meditation, but in character development as well. Then arises the question, "Is Sahaj Marg a system of psychology? Or is it something more?" They have the answer within themselves but, at a superficial level, the mind itself appears to throw up such a suggestion in the form of this question, perhaps revealing an inner resistance.

Raja yoga uses the mind and, naturally, anything pertaining to the mind can be assumed to fall under the broad category of knowledge now called psychology. This will be misleading, for the yoga systems of India are ancient, indeed "as old as the mountains" as the saying goes. Psychology, at least in the Western world, is a recent science, perhaps no more than a century old, if that. In the West, psychology and

its practice are ends in themselves. Indeed, acquisition of knowledge itself appears to be the highest end. In the East, however, knowledge is relevant as an aspect of existence, to be used as a means to the ultimate end or aim of spiritual evolution.

Psychology does therefore play its role in this system, especially in the aspect of the *sadhana*, or practice, involving interaction with the spiritual guide which may resemble counseling. Yoga psychology, as it is being increasingly referred to, strongly emphasizes the psychological aspects of yogic practice. This may mislead one into thinking that yoga is nothing but psychology. Sahaj Marg, which is a practical system of yogic sadhana, uses appropriate methods to promote the spiritual life and evolution of the aspirant. The thrust of sadhana is not on the acquisition of knowledge, but on the spiritual purpose of achieving first *liberation,* followed by *realisation,* finally culminating in the grand union of the individual soul or *jivatman* with the Ultimate, the *Paramatman,* also called God, centre, the source, etc. This final state is called *laya avastha* in Sanskrit.

This book, by a Western abhyasi of the Sahaj Marg yoga discipline, offers his personal insight into the simple but effective system of abhyas that he has adopted, and the role that psychology plays in it. He is a professional psychiatrist and psychotherapist, and has approached Sahaj Marg with the spirit of inquiry that the Vedas themselves commend as being essential in a seeker, a *jignsu.*

P. Rajagopalachari
Madras, 28th August 1995

PREFACE

The following chapters have been written in preparation for speeches delivered on different occasions, mainly during the training courses organized by the Sahaj Marg Research Institute of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission of Hyderabad. This gave me added freedom compared to the more systematic writing of a book. Its preparation obliged me, however, to focus on a particular subject and to verify the different information gathered in my memory, or on numerous sheets of paper, in correlation to Sahaj Marg literature.[1]

The first part deals with generalities about psychology and about a 'spiritualized' psychology, compatible with Sahaj Marg principles whose roles in spirituality are described and discussed.

The second part is an application of those principles proposed in the first part, derived from such a spiritually oriented psychology, or even a spiritual psychology, where our spiritual guide gives his own views. The particular application chosen here deals with what is basic for each *abhyasi*, i.e., the method, the Mission and the Master.

Let us hope that by his grace this effort will help abhyasis to use such information with their hearts rather than with their intellect, for greater discrimination between that which

---

[1] For readers not familiar with Sahaj Marg tradition, the following books will provide a good introduction:
Complete Works of Ram Chandra, vol. I
My Master, by P. Rajagopalachari
A Sahaj Marg Companion: The Natural Path, by Clark Powell
(See bibliography for more information.)

leads them away from the goal and that which leads them more directly to the goal.

Ferdinand Wulliemier

Acknowledgments

This book would not have been written if Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari had not suggested it, and also directly participated in its content, before, during, and after the presentation of most of its chapters at the Sahaj Marg Research Institute's training courses in Hyderabad.

As a result, I have felt pushed to ponder and meditate on important and delicate subjects, an activity which kept my thoughts directed towards the three M's (method, Mission, Master), and for this I feel grateful.

Several brother and sister abhyasis helped me also to different extents and in different ways in the writing of this book, either by their observations, suggestions, criticisms, or by their technical contributions throughout this process. I hope I have not forgotten anybody when mentioning their names in the following list, which also marks my thankfulness towards them: Gérard Abraham, Barbara and Harold Armstrong, Ivor Browne, Bernard Chasteau, Laurent Clerdouet, André Denjean, Francois Dérouléde, Patrick Fleury, Michéle Gervreau, Babeth Harmitt, Jennifer Henchoz, Simone Hubert, K.S. Kannan, June Levine, R.L. Mimani, Christine Morard, Vincent Piguet, Christine Prisland, Danielle Raball, Otto Reicheneder, Fausto Russo, Don Sabourin, Luz Sigl, Liselotte Taarup, Charles Treichler, Hippolyta Voet-Van Lieshout, Catherine Wulliemier, Jeanne Wulliemier, Rachel Wulliemier, Diana and William Waycott.

PART ONE

PSYCHOLOGIES AND SAHAJ MARG PSYCHOLOGY

"In spirituality there is only one problem and it is yourself."

Shri P. Rajagopalachari

Introduction

Taking Psychology Into Consideration in the Sahaj Marg System

Before describing the way in which this book is set out, I would like to share with you some of the hesitations and confusion which I found facing me as soon as I began to seriously think about it. I feel more honest showing what my approach was, especially the form it took in my mind at the beginning, rather than re-writing the introduction at the end of this first volume. This may be confusing at first, but will become clearer as time goes on.

It is for me an opportunity to relate some personal feelings and anecdotes in a sharing of weaknesses and miseries as a model of non-hurtful introspection, instead of cherishing them secretly with guilt feelings, which only complicates matters.

My struggle shows the kind of on-going psychological effort necessary to achieve something such as a book, but the real goal of psychology is change. And we will see later that psychological change is one's own responsibility along the spiritual way and depends on one's will.

So this introduction starts with contradictory statements, some very pessimistic, about our human capacity to change psychologically, in the hope that it will stimulate us rather than discourage us. We will also turn to our Masters for help, quoting their relevant statements. Then we will summarize the topics that will be treated in this first part.

Let us start with my personal contradictions, confusions, and inner conflicts about psychology, and about this particular contribution called *Psychology and Its Role in Spirituality.*

On several occasions, I asked myself if I were participating in the Sahaj Marg Research Institute for a re-gilding of a past academic reputation, or as service to the Mission and the Master. Till now, I content myself with the answer that, through this activity, Master is working on me and at least he is going to teach me what is the real place of psychology, and how it should be practised in the service of our spiritual goal.

Chariji recently made a comment relevant to this idea, when we were discussing the Sahaj Marg Research Institute training course, for which this chapter was written:

> "Well, you should, for this first course, use much time for teaching about psychology, maybe a whole day, give a maximum quantity of information... don't you want to write a book... and later on it will reduce itself more and more, until psychology is a very thin thing."

And when he was speaking, I had the feeling he was describing the necessary cure for ego or grossness.

However, it is far too early to saw off the branch on which I am sitting by giving the impression that psychology is to be disqualified, because I have observed during my life, and also on our spiritual path itself, how burdensome our psychological problems can be in relation to behaviour and character troubles. According to my reading of Sahaj Marg literature about this topic, my conviction has been reinforced that changing our characters is the main challenge of psychology. This pushed me to investigate it further to avoid psychological stagnation or even aggravation.

What we can find in the literature regarding this topic is largely from three authors, two of whom are rather pessimistic about the possibilities of the evolution of human kind:

1. MacLean, a renowned American neurophysiologist, considered at the end of his career that the human being was the result of a malformation, in other words, a monster [14]. The conclusion is very simple: nothing can be done until this monster disappears in one way or another.

2. A. Koestler had much the same idea, but thought that the only possible change would come from a quasi-miraculous pill changing the human mind, pacifying it so that self- and hetero-destruction could be stopped, and prevent us from a universal catastrophe [168].

What do our spiritual guides say? In the history of the Sahaj Marg system, the first mention of psychology that I could find is dated 17 February 1945 in the *Autobiography of Ram Chandra.* Babuji reports that Lalaji posed the following questions:

- How is human psychology related to Nature?
- To which region are the brain cells related? What is the condition in that region?
- How can the nature of man be transformed?
- What help do the natural tendencies render in character formation — good or bad?
- What are the particles (components) related to character? How can those particles be transformed?

Let us now quote Chariji from the Chittor speech on the thirty-first of December 1984, entitled 'Discipline':

"The very spiritual development that Master gives us seems, in some way, to tarnish our external, our conduct, our sense of responsibility, and I am still not able to understand why this is so."

As you know, he never tells the entire truth to us, otherwise, as he said recently, "There would be no Sahaj Marg any more, or maybe only three of us."[2]

Let us go on with another quotation from the above-mentioned speech on discipline, in order to show how seriously he seems to consider this problem of lack of convergence between outer and inner conditions to be: "It is not just something to be ashamed of, it is scandalizing. It is so hard that sometimes I have questioned the efficacy of our system itself." He adds, "This has been a problem for my Master even!" And later, "Today, it is not so much a crisis of the mob or the crisis of the forthcoming third world war, as it is the crisis of character." And finally, "It is for each individual to make up his mind: if I don't correct myself I am inviting calamity on myself."

It may be my arrogance, my personal samskaras or, more positively considered, my own sense of responsibility which made me think that I should respond actively to these words quoted from the same speech:

> "A living individual is supposed to condition his existence by his own volition and by his own will power, using his intellect, judging what is good for himself, teaching and being taught, developing and helping others to develop, growing and helping others to grow."

Furthermore, I read Chariji's statement about the necessity of elaborating a Sahaj Marg psychology, also as a request from his Master, Babuji Maharaj. But to tell you the truth, I couldn't find the quotation of this statement. I asked Chariji about it, and he answered jokingly, that maybe I had a vision, but also that he must have said something like this, somewhere.

---

[2] I don't know if he was thinking of Lalaji, Babuji, and himself, or some other courageous living abhyasis. (Informal conversation, Madras, May 1992)

To complicate things, he also said that psychology as such, was almost unknown to Indians, generally to their benefit. This could be interpreted in two ways: first, that we could manage very well without it; or, secondly, that Indians practised psychology without calling it that, in a better way than we in the West. Of course, when I heard this statement, I was once more puzzled for a while. This feeling was reinforced in August 1991 at the Manapakkam ashram site, an Indian preceptor commented, "Sahaj Marg psychology doesn't exist; you can't write it; it is Sahaj Marg philosophy!" and I couldn't convince him, despite a ten minute discussion.

I still persist with this psychological subject in India, with Indian abhyasis, even suggesting that we work on it together. In other words, I was so bold as to request the active participation of the trainers to write their observations or ideas or reactions elicited by my talk at Hyderabad. "After the speech, please kindly agree to work in small groups of six or seven persons, for a 'heart-brain-storming'[3] in order to help us to go further in this delicate and important subject which, as Chariji said, is entirely our own responsibility. Of course," I assured them, "we will be helped by the close presence of our spiritual guide, and this is a great privilege. During the session I invited him to interrupt directly, at any time. He has agreed to participate on the panel which will take place after we have gathered the relevant information stemming from the small group discussions."

The substance of this first part, Psychologies and Sahaj Marg Psychology, will consist of the following elements:

---

[3] This technique, called here MD-56, is described below in the section on Methodology. Some relevant statements produced during the presentation of this topic during the training course of Sahaj Marg Research Institute in Hyderabad (8 October 1991), have been included in the present text.

First, there is a rather long explanation of the *Historical Review of Psychology in the West*, where I have tried to make a very tight selection of what I thought should be known in order to understand how we have strayed from the first Greek pitfall up to some convergence with Oriental psychology and spirituality through the recent trend of Transpersonal Psychologies.

This historical review serves to introduce some basic principles of what I considered necessary to constitute a Sahaj Marg Psychology, i.e., a natural psychology, according to some statements made mainly by our living spiritual guide, Shri P. Rajagopalachari.

By doing this, we will find the core of such a psychology linked to spirituality, namely the changes in our character and behaviour which are necessary. Later on we will be able to describe the roles of this Sahaj Marg psychology, like preparing us, educating us, explaining to us, correcting or treating us.

Methodology Applied to this Study

I have used seven ways of gathering information for the writing of this book.

First: self-observation, or introspection. The main reason for using this is that in spirituality all information comes from within, provided we give ourselves the means for seeking it, for example through meditation, which is the best method. Of course, the value of such self-observations depends on our lucidity, on our discriminatory capacities, on our purity, or our depth of insight. As a consequence, you and I should accept that I have tried to do my best, taking into account my present limitations.

The second way is based on my professional training, a more or less continuous observation of my brothers and sisters on the biological, psychological, and spiritual levels, and especially of those brothers and sisters called abhyasis. This has been done in different contexts, as follows:

As an abhyasi observing brothers and sisters during regular *satsangh* in the center where I usually go for meditation; or during bhandara*s* (spiritual functions or celebrations), when we live together in ashrams. I paid particular notice to abhyasis having been in intense personal contact with Chariji during some particular phase of their sadhana. Also, as a preceptor serving abhyasis, as a psychiatrist or psychotherapist, since clients have become and continue to become abhyasis, generally towards, or at the end, of their psychotherapy. As a psychiatrist of abhyasis, who were not previously my clients, but who requested some psychotherapeutic help, either briefly during bhandara*s* (mainly in Europe, but now also in India), or on a more regular and

prolonged basis at home in Lausanne, Switzerland. Sometimes as the psychiatrist and the preceptor for some abhyasis in a few particular cases, or as the Secretary of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission in Switzerland; such a person receives a lot of information of different levels and qualities, verbally, by telephone, or by letters. Again, the accuracy of these observations, as mentioned about introspection, is related to my personal limits at the present time.

The third way has been by sharing my general observations with other abhyasis in a similar profession, some also being preceptors. Let me add that this process can be done without betraying the personal secrets of any particular abhyasi.

The fourth process has been through reading Sahaj Marg literature by means of key-words, in such a way that later on I could collect the bits of information to build chapters. I used about 180 items, some of which overlap each other, such as samskaras, suffering, ego, narcissism, prejudice, reactions, and so on.

The fifth way has been via the general literature on psychology, psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine, and also my own training and experience as a psychiatrist. I selected from these sources what would be useful to know, in order to understand how the ideas on our present topic evolved, mainly in the West, and what out of these studies could be useful to us and compatible with the general trends of a Sahaj Marg psychology. Over the past fifteen years, I have developed the pet craze of indexing the books I read with key-words, which has proved a useful tool for this purpose.

Each time I meet Chari, I have my tape-recorder with me, or my post-it-notes, and I collect these informal

speeches, answers to specific questions. I do the same through personal letters.

We can add the 'MD-56 technique', which was tried out for the first time in Hyderabad in October 1991. 'M' means meditation; 'D' means discussion. Fifty means that the whole procedure's duration is fifty minutes, half of this time for meditation, the other half for discussion. Six means that these discussions took place among groups of six people, one of whom collected and wrote the quintessence of ideas put forth during the discussion (questions, observations, personal experiences, criticisms, etc.). These ideas were then read to everyone there and commented upon by the speaker or by the members of a panel.[4]

[4] As far as this book is concerned, the verbal comments of this MD-56 activity that took place 8 October 1991 have been collected and 're-injected' in diverse forms, like footnotes or concluding questions and answers (see chapter 8).

— 1 —

A Review of Western and Eastern Psychology

In defining psychology, or psychologies, it is seen how this science developed in the West and how some of its developments relate to Eastern views. I will try to avoid giving unnecessary information, and do my best to 'use my primitive heart to lead my modern brain.' But it is difficult, especially when we use words or concepts which are our intellectual tools for helping us clarify our subject, but on the other hand, can be used to mask reality, as Ken Wilber has clearly shown in his book *Spectrum of Consciousness* [154].

In order to avoid some misunderstandings concerning the term 'psychology', let me suggest that psychology, as a study, is supposed to allow us to understand ourselves and others.

The concept of psyche had, among Greek philosophers, the meaning of life, breath, and soul, so that psychology was considered as a part of philosophy, dealing with the human soul and its different states and operations. This confirms that psychology is a Western concept, at least for Indians, because they live farther east than the Greeks. Moreover, the doctrines on the soul elaborated by Aristotle and Plato have been considered as basic references in the West and later in time, that is to say in Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, or even later.[5]

---

[5] It is probable that these doctrines have been partly imported from India, either directly or by the use of Persian messengers. For example, several Greek philosophers (i.e., Aristotle and Plato) were living in the Asian part of

During the nineteenth century, through different influences, psychology became a positivist science, and cut itself off from its metaphysical or philosophical roots. In order to study the natural laws of the different states of consciousness, psychology uses self-observation or introspection, and external observation (comparative psychology). According to the different external 'objects' studied, psychology, over time, gave birth to a number of subspecialties such as social psychology, transcultural psychology, institutional psychology, child psychology, adolescent psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, behavioural sciences, behaviourism (Pavlovian or Skinnerian), etc.[6] To complicate things a little more, the medical profession developed the study of mental diseases, and later psychopathology to try to help disturbed people. Philippe Pinel (1745-1826), a French physician, ordered the insane to be delivered from their chains (literally), and to treat them more humanely than was the practice in big cities like Paris at that time.

So we see how it goes when we start to split, to divide. In this case, we no longer have one psychology, but a lot of psychologies. Some are mainly introspective, such as the development of psychoanalysis, egopsychology, existential psychology, etc. Some are experimental, trying to imitate the exact sciences, measuring different functions of the so-called psychic apparatus, like psychometric psychology, using intelligence tests like the Wechsler test, or projective tests

---

the Greek territories, along the Mediterranean coast of the present-day Turkey.

[6] In order to avoid overloading each of these specialties with the corresponding numbers in the bibliography, I have preferred giving an overview of these specialties, arranged according to subject, at the end of the book. However, I have given the numbers each time an author is cited and each time it is needed for clarity.

like Rorschach, or MMPI.[7] Furthermore, some psychologies primarily study the interactions between people, such as the various forms of family or network therapy. Then there is clinical psychology, a hodgepodge which claims an overall knowledge by attempting to bring together many more specialized areas of psychology. Psychiatry, as a branch of medicine originally associated with neurology, has also contributed to this parceling out of the field, giving birth to psychophysiology, psycho-pharmacology, bio-psychiatry, psychosomatic medicine, liaison psychiatry and neuro-psychology.

Theoretical psychology has also been distinguished from applied psychology, more frequently called psychotherapy. To be more realistic, there are many psychotherapies, all of which attempt to influence human behaviour, in other words to produce change according to some criteria of normalcy, which of course varies from one school of psychology to another.

For example, behaviourists apply their so-called learning principles (like operand conditioning, punishment, modeling, etc.) in order to promote some behaviour considered as more or better adapted. Better adapted to what? To the environment, i.e., to the norms of a society at a particular time. By the way, it is obvious that such a trend in psychology, mainly derived from experiments with animals, is not going to be very interesting to, or compatible with, the Oriental criteria of normality. These are very different, since they are issued from a much higher order of consciousness.

Between these two extremes, some other psychological or psychotherapeutic schools have also elaborated norms, such as Freudian psychoanalysis and its derivatives.

---

[7] Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory.

Then there are some more recent Western psychologies that started mainly in the USA in the 1950's. Through the impetus of different authors including A. Maslow [82,83], E. Fromm [78,79], C. Rogers [88], F. Perls [86], and A. Lowen [82], stem convergent trends like Gestalt therapy, bio-energy, client-centred therapy, sensory-awareness, rebirth, primal therapy. These trends now constitute a kind of general movement that has been called humanistic psychology, which developed itself on the fringe of the more conventional psychotherapeutic disciplines. In this context psychotherapy is offered in a less medical way. As a consequence, patients become clients, and the 'worried well' are helped as well as the sick. Maslow was interested in those who were feeling particularly well and described so-called 'peak experiences' [83,140].

We must remember that this was in the late sixties in USA, when the Vietnam war was ending. Marilyn Ferguson published *The Brain Revolution* (a best-seller) and prepared the *Aquarian Conspiracy* [164,165]. In this new context, more concern was developed with human potential and personal growth, so that psychosomatic service was offered to everybody. So, no doubt the humanistic movement in psychology has contributed to opening consciousness in the West. It is not surprising, therefore, to observe some attempts to compare and to bring together Western psychology and Oriental philosophy, as for example *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*, a book of conferences edited by S.T. Suzuki, Erich Fromm, and R. de Martino [147].

It was also during the same period that this huge melting pot called the New Age appeared. This was derived from such people as Stanislas Grof and his LSD Therapy [132], followed by his holotropic therapy [133], a kind of hyper-ventilation close to the so-called rebirthing technique promoted by Leonard Orr [85]. This, together with the so-called

near-death experiences (NDE), and the altered states of consciousness (ASC), was brought together under the heading of transpersonal psychologies in 1969, with the first issue of the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology.*

Through this emerging source in the psychology field, a growing number of people in the West have connected with Indian and other Eastern traditions. The dawning of a completely new comprehension of human functioning became inevitable for Western psychology.

We have spoken so far of what happened in the USA, mainly because, since the work of early pioneers like W. James [134-135], things were more active and spectacular there over the past forty years.

In Europe, the evolution of ideas started earlier, but more smoothly, mainly through the influence of Jung (1875-1961), [49,50,51,52,53]. His theories and his way of treating people opened the pathway to esotericism, myths, religions, alchemy, and parapsychology.[8] Parapsychology, earlier called psychic research, remained hidden till the late 1960's, when some scientists, like Rémy Chauvin or Costa de Beauregard, became bold enough to expose their ideas. It was the latter who invited Hans Bender to Paris for a congress in 1975; Hans Bender was one of two parapsychologists who had received a title of professor of such a discipline at a university in Europe. Graf Durkheim [151], a German philosopher and psychologist and also a Christian, brought back to Europe the practice and theory of Za-Zen, which he had experienced in Japan during World War II, and established an influential therapeutic centre in southern Germany.

---

[8] His study of the *Yi-King* (*I Ching*) lead him, for example, to elaborate his principle of synchronicity [137].

Esotericism had also existed continuously for many years, represented mainly by R. Guénon [180] and F. Schuon [181] in the middle of the present century, and later by Abelio and Yves-Albert Dauge. Also on the fringe of the conventional psychotherapeutic societies, the American movements were welcomed by openminded people in Europe, some of whom had been initially influenced by A. Koestler who was in constant contact with many advanced scientists. J. Krishnamurti also played his role, spreading Oriental philosophical ideas in a style that pleased many Westerners from Europe and America. Many other authors should also be mentioned here, like G.I. Gurdjieff [187], A. Desjardins, R. Steiner, or R. Assagioli [123,183].

As a side effect of this new capacity to abandon closed disciplines, more adventurous hypotheses were made when radical psychologists and psychiatrists met like-minded physicists and astronomers. Eventually some moderation was brought in through a more serious collaboration between researchers from different fields. Abuses were observed in the practical field of some 'services' offered to clients, services no longer merely psychotherapeutic, but claiming to be spiritual in nature, sometimes by means of the phenomenon called 'channeling', where the therapist is connected with a cosmic entity (for example, with a famous doctor from ancient times) [131].

Further links were also established with Oriental tradition with the spread of meditation, which became more and more popular in the West. The most widespread has been Transcendental Meditation [159], an association very well equipped, which has produced large quantities of research mainly in the psychosomatic field. The Vipassana meditation system has also been the object of studies in the USA by professors of psychology and psychiatry [158,160,161]. As an example of practical consequences of this evolution in

Holland, people who prove they meditate regularly hope to reduce their health insurance fees.

At the therapeutic level, a recent example of the influence of Oriental spiritual traditions is illustrated in the title of the book by Guy Johanson et al called *Psychology in the Spirit of the Tao Te Ching* [136]. This recommends the application of thirty-three principles for helping people, which are issued from Chinese, Indian (mainly Buddhist) and American Hopi Indian philosophies.

A French psychiatrist and meditator, Jacques Vigne, who has been living in India for several years, has started to elaborate ideas about what could be a 'spiritual psychology' and spiritualized psychotherapists.[9]

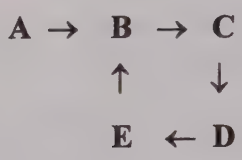
Cybernetics (W.R. Ashby [163]) and General System Theory (GST) (L. Von Bertalanffy [171]) have influenced Western thought during the past fifty years, making sense of many of the developments already described. Replacing the linear way of thinking of cause and effect by a circular one may seem very simple, but it has been and still is a revolutionary way of understanding our daily manifested reality. Whereas to the traditional linear sketch, we would represent the sequence of cause and effect like this:

$$\mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{B} \rightarrow \mathbf{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{D} \rightarrow \mathbf{E} \rightarrow \mathbf{F}$$

The GST has replaced it by a circular one, and consequently we can no longer seriously consider that this is the cause of that, according to this new sketch:

---

[9] *Le Maître et le Thérapeute* (1992), and *Eléments de Psychologie Spirituelle* (1993), both edited by Albin Michel, Paris.



This so-called 'systemic view', although already elaborated during the late 1930's, was progressively adopted among psychologists and sociologists during the sixties, mainly in the USA, giving birth to the dynamic movement, family therapy. This model is much more adapted to dealing with living systems, which are open systems, characterized by their capacity to exchange information within and without the system.

The other important consequence of such a view is that a given living system, for instance a human being, is more than the sum of its parts. One can appreciate how different this view is from the traditional scientific view of analysis, which attempts to describe reality by cutting open a living entity (a human being) and dividing it into its parts in order to study and understand it.

With this new tool, scientists of different disciplines have also been much better able to co-operate in interdisciplinary studies, leading to transdisciplinarity (creation of new disciplines). This is possible because in the systemic model we have a hierarchical order, permitting us to avoid confusion of categories (as B. Russel [176] and A. N. Whitehead [177,178] pointed out).

This so-called systemic model has had much influence on psychology, even on traditionally individualistic views like psychoanalysis. As a result, it is now difficult to consider a human being as an isolated individual. One can see the philosophical consequences of such a view for Westerners: it leaves no reason to separate the different levels of hierarchy

of living systems. So now general inter-connected views can be elaborated, going from the infinitesimal to the infinitely great.

As a result, some comprehensive models are being developed. To my knowledge, the most elaborate model or paradigm in general literature comes from Ken Wilber [156], who seems to have been able to understand and transcend the contributions of natural sciences like physics, of human sciences like psychology, and of the main Western and Eastern philosophies. I don't know him personally, but I know that he meditates and that he has approached several spiritual guides This probably explains his ability to put together his broad erudition and his spiritual capacities in order to re-mold and reorganize Western psychological knowledge, and to connect them with Eastern views on different 'states of consciousness'. This thinking has been mainly developed in two books, called respectively *Spectrum of Consciousness* and *Transformations of Consciousness* [154,158], the latter published in 1986, in which a broader synthesis is announced under the title of *System, Self and Structure*, not yet published.

It is not the place here to explain all this work, but let me just say that he was able to build a hierarchical model for the different so-called levels of consciousness people are supposed to go through in their natural development, from early childhood to adulthood, or from the so-called 'autistic phase' to spiritual unity. Of course, in this respect, Western psychology has mainly studied the first stages, such as developmental psychology, or the regression-fixation phases in psychopathology: from the level of autism (as found in the schizophrenic or the very young baby), to the level called 'existential state of consciousness'.

So, Western psychology has well investigated what K. Wilber called the prepersonal and the personal basic structures of consciousness.[10] Oriental systems have, on the other hand, mainly studied the more advanced stages called transpersonal structures of consciousness, classified by Wilber as psychic, subtle, and causal, preceding the non-dual structure of consciousness. Wilber's sharp discrimination allowed me to see more clearly the relationship of specific pathologies observable at each stage of human consciousness, with the appropriate types of therapies applicable for the avoidance of misunderstandings and inefficiency.

But let us come back to our main purpose in this chapter on Western and Eastern psychology, which was to show that it has now started to complete a cycle consisting of a gradual detachment from yoga and/or from philosophy, spreading later on in many sub-specialties, and recently partly coming back home, to its origin. At the present time, Western psychology appears to me something like a comet, whose head is looking to spirituality. Consequently, it would be a very good opportunity for it to transmit from now on to its tail and its multiple parts a coherent, unifying, subtle inspiration which has been cruelly missing. In this metaphor, the head of the comet is mentioned, but it will be with their hearts that human beings will have to work in order to fulfill this task.

Now, after having patiently listened to this review, maybe you wonder why I wasted my time on such an activity, and moreover, for what reasons I could be cruel enough to submit you to it.

---

[10] We may then consider that it is a normal and logical consequence of psychology's own historical 'will' to have detached itself from its higher situated parents, i.e., philosophy or spirituality.

When I was sweating over the elaboration of this summary, starting from a huge shambles of different sources of information, I happened to realise from what a pigsty I was slowly emerging. I had to study all that mess; I had also to go through many of these therapies myself, starting in 1970 with a Freudian psychoanalysis, followed by different humanistic types of psychosomatic therapies, like Rolfing and bio-energy, followed by transpersonal therapy in the form of rebirthing sessions. And, as a professional, with the collaboration of a physiotherapist working according to the principles of G. Alexander's *Eutony* [4], we also created our own type of treatment called 'physio-psychotherapy' for helping our clients evolve up to the existential level of functioning, as a starting point for approaching spirituality.

All this was, in fact, necessary for me to labouriously arrive at the practice of meditation through Za-Zen, and eventually to reach Sahaj Marg in 1987. But in Augerans in July 1989, out of politeness, Chariji once told me when we were discussing this topic, "You came well-prepared."[11] At that time I was flattered. But when I wrote this text, I thought differently, maybe partly because a few days before I heard him saying what I have reported earlier: "If I had to tell the truth, there would be no more Sahaj Marg!"

So I could imagine that, without lying, he didn't pronounce the beginning and the end of the entirely true sentence, which could have been more or less the following: "After all these sufferings and complexities, you came well prepared... to start decontamination, deconditioning on yourself, because it would be difficult to be more contaminated!"

---

[11] Augerans, July 1989.

Another reason for originally presenting this text in India, is that the majority of the Mission's abhyasis are Indian. Just as Westerners coming to India try to understand its people and culture, so this study gives the Indian abhyasis an opportunity to understand why we behave as we do, the type of grossness that passes through us, why we have so many difficulties meditating properly, why we are attached to the forms, to so-called 'experiences', why we have such inflated egos; and that brings us back to the inflated Western psychology which, Chariji warned me gently, needed to go through a slimming cure.[12]

I have been very cautious so far with the term 'psychology' when I have mentioned Eastern concepts, because I know that precisely the same concept is not used in the original languages of India. On the other hand, since English is now broadly used as a language in India, the use of this word is unavoidable, even if it has a Greek origin. In order to move along through Eastern psychology very quickly, let me say that since I found at least one book entitled *True Psychology,* by Swami Abhedananda (1866-1939) [108], a disciple of Shri Ramakrishna, no objection concerning the existence of psychology in India seems possible any more. This book states, "If we study the Hindu psychology, which is as old as the Vedas, we find that it admitted the existence of body, mind, and soul as well as their relations. So by studying the Eastern psychology, especially Hindu psychology, we get a clear idea of what true psychology is. True psychology is the yoga psychology, and the yoga *sutras* of Patanjali is known as the Hindu psychology."

---

[12] Of course, and as usual, I am convinced he is right, and that it is my duty as a teaching psychiatrist to say and to write it, and even, if possible, with his help, to prove it by my own personal evolution.

I discovered quite a few other books dealing with Indian psychology, the titles of which are in the bibliography. Being presently at a stage of studying these books, one of the feelings I have so far, is that Indian psychology has remained rooted in its spiritual sources for its inspiration. For example, Jadunath Sinha [121] goes deeply into the study of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* or the *tantras* in order to understand the relationships between body and self or the nature of emotion, because the Indian scriptures contain so many references to concepts and statements which we classify as psychological.

As we know, Buddhism has also contributed to the elaboration of what we call the 'field of psychology', but again with the main purpose of realising the ultimate goal [186,188,195]. Haridas Chaudhuri illustrates this point in the chapter called Yoga Psychology which he wrote in C. Tart's *Transpersonal Psychologies* [112], "Yoga psychology is the art as well as the science of the human psyche as a growth process." "A person can truly know the Self only by becoming one with the Self."

Sufis have also intensively dealt with psychology in their spiritually oriented teachings, sometimes very explicitly, as in Hazrat Inayat Khan's books entitled *The Art of Personality* or *Philosophy, Psychology, Mysticism* [115]. As a result on a practical level, spiritual guides are thought credible in the East, especially in India, for what Westerners would call psychotherapeutic help .

As a conclusion, I propose then to say that although in Sanskrit or Urdu, a concept strictly equivalent to psychology doesn't exist, one can retrospectively say that in the traditional literature of the Orient, a large number of statements, a great number of words, are included in the field of

what the Greeks, and later the Europeans defined as psychology.[13]

So, psychology is mainly a question of definitions, showing the tendency in the West to separate objects in order to study them. And when you cut things up, you get different parts which evolve on their own. I think that the problem between Western psychology and the Yogic tradition has been created by the evolution of the West into a materialistic, mechanistic conception of the world, which has occurred after the Renaissance, mainly during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

During the MD-56 session, Chariji was asked the question, "What is Oriental psychology?"

"Psychology is psychology. There is no such being as the Eastern and the Western. The therapeutic measures may differ when used by an Easterner or a Westerner... . It is like saying Eastern religions and Western thought, you know, like in one of the famous books by Bertrand Russell. Thinking, we all think, we all eat, human beings share a common heritage. Now it has become fashionable to distinguish between Oriental and Occidental and things like that. But essentially the human psyche is one. So I cannot see how we can have a Western psychology which is not also Eastern, or vice versa, though the language may differ. He may speak in English, I may speak in Hindi. So there is no such thing as that."

Now, as far as Sahaj Marg psychology is concerned, for me there is no doubt that many statements of our successive Masters are often related to what is commonly called psychology in the West, although they are not directly

---

[13] A further reference about psychology in India can be found in the books of Shri Aurobindo, one of which is titled *Psychology* [109,110] (French translation, Nov. 1951). In French, Jean Herbert has gathered texts from the same Aurobindo, called *Métaphysique et Psychologie*. Regarding Sahaj Marg psychology, I also found a conversation with Shri P. Rajagopalachari, on 5 January 1985, entitled Sahaj Marg Psychology; I haven't found it printed in a book so far. It contains mainly statements about ego and samskaras.

presented as such. Furthermore, Chariji has confirmed[14] that he must have said that a Sahaj Marg psychology should be elaborated, so that this question is solved. What hasn't been solved yet is what form Sahaj Marg psychology will take, except that it will clearly transcend the so-called Oriental and the so-called Western psychologies. So Sahaj Marg psychology is what we are going to start working out in the next chapter.

[14] Informal conversation, Madras, April 1991.

— 2 —

Five Basic Characteristics of Sahaj Marg Psychology

(A) The principle of the spiritual source.

(B) The principle of the action taking place at the level from which the problem has arisen.

(C) The principle of selection of psychological theories and practices compatible with spirituality.

(D) The leadership of the heart over the intellect. The necessity for a noble character.

(E) The principle of minimum interference.

The time has not yet come for me to be able to present Sahaj Marg psychology in chapters, in topics, and in details, because the gathering of information has only just begun, and it will take a long time to complete this huge puzzle.[15]

---

[15] This puzzle contains some of the previous writings of the Sahaj Marg Research Institute, as far back as 1970, whose psychology-oriented topics are listed below as a proof of the interest, or of the importance already given at that time to such psychological topics in Shri Ram Chandra Mission:

- *Yoga Psychology and Modern Physiological Theories* (Dr. K.C. Varadachari): this booklet contains a speech from Shri P. Rajagopalachari, 'Sahaj Marg and the Problem of Personality', also published in *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. II, pp.1-8.
- *Shri Ram Chandra's interesting investigations on the physio-psychology of the human organism* (Dr K.C. Varadachari et al, 1970).
- *Temperamental Differences and their Relation to Spiritual Realization* (Shri K.C. Narayana, 1970).
- *Neurophysiological Basis of Raja Yoga in the Light of Sahaj Marg* (V. Shri Ramachandra Murthy, 1979).

The basic characteristics of a Sahaj Marg psychology, could well be considered as part of a 'Sahaj Psychology': a psychology which follows the laws of Nature, of *dharma*, which as we know means both cosmic universal order, and a mixture of duty, virtue, morality. As a result, these principles should not be restricted to Shri Ram Chandra Mission, but considered as basic principles valid for the application of any psychological approach within spirituality.

These psychological and spiritual concepts overlap each other somewhat, as is usually the case with soft data.

The 1st Principle:

The Spiritual Source

The basic rule for me, is that Sahaj Marg psychology should not be an isolated entity (as Western psychology has been for too long a period), but linked to spirituality as its permanent creative service. Put this way, the title of this book would be reversed, i.e., *The Role of Psychology in Spirituality*. In other words, there is a hierarchy. According to Sahaj Marg philosophy also, we all know that the more subtle contains and impregnates the more solid. As a consequence, spirituality can judge psychology, can influence it, whereas the contrary is not true: psychology cannot explain spirituality, nor influence it.

As Mother Krishnabaë, from Anandashram in Kerala, answered a question of French psychiatrist, Jacques Vigne: "I don't know psychology, but I'll tell you what is essential."[16]

I should, of course, not use the word spirituality without defining it. But, as we know, it is very dodgy to do so,

---

[16] Jacques Vigne, *Le Maître et le Thérapeute*, Albin Michel, 1992, p.193.

because the subtler the level to which we go, the less precisely describable it is with words. It would have been less difficult for example, to define biology than psychology, because much in this discipline is still measurable, and it would be even less difficult to define physics or chemistry. But as far as spirituality is concerned, we have few points of reference, and as a result there are many definitions of spirituality. Chariji alone has pronounced at least fifty sentences starting with the words "spirituality says..."[17]

There are some consistent statements about spirituality in dictionaries and encyclopedia: "That spirituality is in opposition to materialism." "That spirituality is concerned with the life of the soul, something very similar to the etymological definition of psychology." "That spirituality is the aspiration, the intention to unite with what is called God, the Self or the *Atman*."[18]

Add to these statements the famous one of Babuji's: "Spirituality begins where religion ends; Reality begins where spirituality ends." The following statements of Chariji further illustrates this principle:

"The higher function is in one way the cause of the performance of the lower functions."[19]

"Psychology is the most superficial science, to my way of thinking, dealing with the human mind. You know, suppose we are talking to the ocean, and an oceanographer, or better still, a man who deals with tides and waves, comes and talks about the tides and the waves and you say, 'No, no, I was speaking about the ocean; don't talk about the tides and waves.' Well, the tides and waves are part of the ocean, the superficial

---

[17] It is one of my plans to publish a collection of such statements.

[18] I was astonished to find in an old dictionary the term "spiritual bouquet" (*bouquet spirituel* in French) defined as a thought maintained in the mind as if to breathe in its fragrance: a poetic way of describing constant remembrance!

[19] Conversation with Shri P. Rajagopalachari in Madras, 5 January 1985.

skin on the ocean. So, does spirituality deal psychologically with its abhyasis? No. Psychology is a science of yesterday, the day before yesterday. And however much we may want to flaunt the achievements of a Jung or a Freud or of an Adler, or their tribe, it is a very superficial approach. Whereas spirituality is a science as old as existence itself.

"When man began to live he had some idea of his goal, perhaps not the grandiose ideas of the centre and things like that, but something told him 'I am not what I should be or what I have to be.' That was the beginning of spirituality. So, it is like saying that chemistry rules dietetics for instance; you talk of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals. It is not chemistry which dictates dietetics, but that the things which we eat in some way also come under the purview of chemistry; and also under the purview of physics, because they are solids, liquids, gases, so they come under physics. They are also white, brown, blue and so they come under the purview of artists, if they choose. An artist can paint tomatoes and carrots in a still life picture. 'Oh, that is a gastronomic painting!' Yes, why not? If you can paint a building and enjoy it, why not a tomato, why not a banana? The subject doesn't make the art. Art ennobles the subject. Spirituality must ennoble psychology, not contra. Psychology is, to my mind, not worth the paper on which it is written, though it is a useful thing. If you are going to be guided by psychology in your spiritual approach, we are dealing with the waves and not plunging into the ocean."[20]

From this very clear text, which lead me to formulate the first principle, we can deduce the following points:

- A spiritualized psychology, and mainly its therapeutic aspect called psychotherapy, must have a spiritual goal, otherwise it is not very useful, and it is in any case insufficient.[21]
- The goal of such a psychology is to prepare us for spirituality and spiritual practice, and/or to help us when paralyzing or dangerous difficulties happen on our spiritual path, i.e. in our evolution. In that sense, I assume that spirituality is already ennobling psychology.

---

[20] *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.142-143.

[21] As we know, the lowest spiritual goal is liberation.

- Another way in which psychology, and especially psychotherapy, can be ennobled by spirituality consists in the use of spiritual means, like silent and subtle positive suggestion, prayer, etc., when needed. This will be further explained in the third, fourth and fifth principles which will be discussed later, and described in more detail in the next chapter, when we discuss psychology's roles of correcting and treating.

A third way of spiritualizing psychology relates to the particular type of relationship developed between the psychotherapist and his/her client. Instead of a rather superficial relationship between two egos, between two intellects, or between two astral bodies, there will be a heart to heart relationship. In other words, each brother or sister will be considered as a soul rather than a body-ego or an intellectual ego.

Classical psychology and especially psychotherapy may be useful for aiding growth from an infantile to a so-called adult level, when the natural evolution has been disturbed for some reason. But we should realise that its usual aim is to help us change some behaviour, some habits, occasionally, if rarely, some traits of character, to enable us to be more adaptable within our family, our network, our society, with its norms and rules, what Pierre Weil and Jacques Vigne have called our *normosis*. In that sense, the process of adultification or growing remains incomplete. We can also say that the shift from the 'pleasure principle', which is the privilege of the child, as Freud has clearly demonstrated, to the 'reality principle', which is the realm of the adult, is not fully realised. This process of growing up comes to an end in the field of psychology at the so-called existential level, from which spirituality alone can take over, leading us to the true Reality. One could say that psychotherapy may sometimes help us to go from the animal level to the human level,

whereas spirituality is the science of divinisation, which should include and guide the former transition.

Let us take the example of transmission, of *pranahuti*, and its direct psychological effects:

"The immediate result, almost at the very first sitting with the Master or a preceptor of the Mission, is a feeling of peace and lightness. This has been confirmed again and again by innumerable abhyasis from their own personal experience of this method of sadhana. It is a matter of fact that a de-tensioning is effected by loosening the knots of tension in the psychic area, which immediately bestows upon the abhyasi a peace such as he has never known before. This is a total effect upon the personality, and not piece-meal effort aimed at one or the other phases of it. Worry, born of frustration and indecision, is perhaps the first to go. Fear follows soon after, or if it is deep-rooted, it nevertheless leaves some time later, of this there is no doubt. I have heard Dr. Varadachari quoting, time and again, that famous sloka *Abhayam sarvabhutebhyo dadami, etat vratam mama.* I was never able to appreciate the deep significance of this utterance, and the great need for the fearlessness which the Lord promises here, until fear became the one obsessive emotion in my own life. That I am, in the main, rid of this is due to the efficacy of this unique system of Sahaj Marg."[22]

Unfortunately, many errors due to reversing the hierarchy between the spiritual and the psychological, or even the biological or physical levels have been made in scientific history and in practical applications of scientific theories and models, engendering too much confusion, called 'confusions pre/trans' by K. Wilber [156]. One of them has been, for example, to try to philosophize by means of theories issuing from the field of physics.

In the scale of Wilber's spectrum of consciousness, and in the book of Scott Peck, a bestseller called *The Road Less Traveled* [193], the field of spirituality is presented in

---

[22] Sahaj Marg and the Problems of Personality (Shri P. Rajagopalachari), in *Sahaj Marg and Personality Problems and Yoga Psychology and Modern Physiological Theories*, by Dr. K.C. Varadachari (Sahaj Marg Research Institute). Reprinted in *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. II, p.1-8.

continuity with the field of psychology, and spiritual practices (like meditation), in continuity with psychotherapy. Of course, I like this idea very much, maybe partly because it gives me a sense of usefulness and of continuity in my psychotherapeutic activity, but also because it clarifies something about religion: If you believe in the dogmas of a particular religion, you are, according to these preceding definitions, at least partially fixed at a psychological level of consciousness and not yet at a spiritual one, where dogmas are no longer necessary or even possible, because the seeker is evolved enough to experience by himself[23] instead of believing in something in advance, usually something external.

Here again, we can indirectly see that psychology is limited to the territories that can be explored by the thinking activity. In other words, psychology starts very low, at the so-called autistic state, corresponding to the functioning level of a baby between its birth to one month, and it ends at the so-called existential level, where both mind and body are experienced as an integrated self, which is capable of experiencing a so-called panoramic vision or logic. In this way one is able to apprehend a mass network of ideas and how they influence each other and interrelate [158], a "truly higher order synthesizing capacity," which corresponds to the higher mind of Shri Aurobindo [109].

According to that view, classical psychology deals with the pre-personal and personal states of evolution of human beings, whereas spirituality[24] deals with the transpersonal

---

[23] It is, of course, herself as well. But in order to simplify the reading, we will use the masculine form to include both and female.

[24] As we said earlier, Ken Wilber, summarizing these spiritual levels according to different traditions, called them the psychic (or parapsychological), the subtle, and the causal states, on the way up to unity [158].

states of evolution. Classical psychology has never been able to give satisfactory explanations for several phenomena, but has nevertheless tried to study so-called paranormal manifestations, like telepathy, precognition, psychokinesis[25] materializations, etc., as they have been described, but not explained, either, by parapsychology; paramnesia;[26] so-called transpersonal phenomenon like peak, near death, renewal and past life experiences, as well as the acquisition of unlearned knowledge, such as language and possession states; also, some cases of so-called 'multiple personalities'. This incapacity of classical psychology is due to the fact that its realm of consciousness cannot take into account, and transcend, the time-space duality.

On a larger scale, all psychological and psychosomatic phenomena, including symptoms, will gain by being looked at again in the light of spirituality, a task still ahead of us. This will be very beneficial both at an explanatory and therapeutic level, since spirituality embraces the laws of nature.

States of development or consciousness may be arranged in categories for the use of specialists, but in the future it will be possible to present this knowledge in a simpler way to reach a wider public, when further refinement of our perceptions, of our ego, will be experienced by a larger population able to master both causal types of thinking and a-causal types of thinking like synchronicity [137].

This concept of states of consciousness has been very useful to me in order to recognize the different levels from which come the verbal reports of my clients. For example, if

---

[25] Defined as the displacement of objects by 'psychic' force alone.

[26] Defined as a mental representation of *deja vu* (already seen) when a person visits a place for the first time in her present life.

a person reports a dream, there are always several ways of understanding it. But only when the patient's level of functioning has been correctly determined can we choose the right dream interpretation:

> "I would add one more warning: don't refer these matters to psychologists," Chariji says. "Very few of them are even marginally qualified to handle spiritual experiences or dreams with a spiritual content. I feel compelled to give this warning because, more and more, abhyasis ask me, 'Should I consult a psychiatrist?' It is no disrespect to that profession, but their curriculum does not include spiritual experiences. So that is what I have to say because of so many anguished readings, so many anguished interpretations, it reveals a perverse tendency in the human mind, a tendency to often convert an experience into its opposite. And that is a very dangerous tendency. Because, very often, we would rather have the wrong interpretation than wait for the right interpretation."[27]

This kind of error may have serious consequences, such as when a psychiatrist treats a patient with neuroleptics or hospitalizes a patient with some transient mystical exaltation along his spiritual path.

In order to illustrate more personally the necessity for psychology to be constantly connected with its spiritual source, let me add that, for me, when the link with the Master had sufficiently developed, my psychiatric practice changed according to this first rule, bringing psychology under the influence of spirituality. One of the first consequences of this influence was to discover that about seventy-five percent of my clients were interested in spirituality, instead of around twenty percent as I had observed before, just because my own attitude had changed and I started to speak openly about this subject. The next thing I noticed was that I was hearing myself saying things that I had not mentally prepared, with the result that it was received without resistance by the client.

---

[27] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.331.

Later on, the different characteristics of transmission flowing automatically to a greater or lesser extent during sessions, became for me the main thing, with the result that the most sensitive patients were more easily discovering their way up by themselves, sometimes at an astonishing speed. I mean their way from an emotional level of reaction, to a search for something else, different in nature, that we could call spiritual aspiration. Like this, a good number of 'my' clients became and continue to become abhyasis of Sahaj Marg, while others choose another spiritual path. There follows further consequences of this first principle:

1. Ideally psychotherapists, in particular, should be spiritualized. Such therapists will of course become progressively better observers, i.e., to become truly intuitive to what their clients need. This should be the same between abhyasis: replacing the word client by brother or sister.

2. Since spirituality induces us to see beyond manifested differences, the relationship between therapist and client will tend to become essentially fraternal in nature, i.e., heart to heart or soul to soul.

3. Such a psychology will tend to induce a unifying process, to facilitate the growth process of human beings, according to the highest possible spiritual goal, i.e., the so-called outer reality will be more and more understood as a projection of the inner reality. As a consequence, as said earlier, such a psychology will constitute a kind of preparation for spirituality and spiritual practice.

4. A spiritualized psychology will be able to accept the possibility of spiritual healing of psychiatric, psycho-somatic or physical diseases. For example, a guru is

always also a psychotherapist, whereas the reverse is not true.

5. If spirituality is hierarchically above psychology, we should consider all human quests as part of an unconscious spiritual search, i.e., the 'cascade phenomenon'.[28] The same could be inferred concerning human suffering, whether psychological, psychosomatic or physical.

6. As human beings are both mortal and eternal entities, a spiritualised psychology will include the concepts of *samskaras*, of *bhog,* and ipso facto of past life experiences. These can give more satisfactory explanations and tools for many diagnostic and therapeutic problems arising in the psychiatric and in the psychosomatic field.

7. Since spirituality says that we are responsible for ourselves and for our sufferings, since we have created them, such a psychology will give an optimum opportunity to develop self-help capacity, the therapist being a model for it. As Chariji said at Château d'Oex in 1987:

> "The first rule is: don't expect anything from anybody else except yourself. Because my mental health, my physical health, my spiritual health depends on me alone. And if I am to be patient only when others are patient and well-behaved and spiritual — it is like another proverb we have in Tamil, that we wait to bathe in the ocean when the waves stop. Is it ever possible? So this is not just to console you. It's a fact of life. So if we don't come up to that level of training and self-development and self-regulation ourselves and

---

[28] This concept describes the fact that we can find the same (somorphic) pattern from system to system, for example the same kind of information in a large group (like an institution), in a small group (like a family), and inside an individual (down to one's own body, for example) as we see in holograms. (Martell P., Fivaz E. Nemitz I., Wulliemier F.: "Etude interdisciplinaire d'une famille à transactions psychosomatiques." Revue Suisse de Medecine Psychomatique, 1980, p.251-262).

if, suppose, I have to stand at the reception desk tomorrow for two hours and I lose my temper with everyone, instead of my talking about the abhyasis' indiscipline, they will talk about my lack of culture: 'What is this Chari, you know, he gives us so many lectures. When everything is going nice, he is well-behaved, and now, today he is showing his real colour.' So, when we learn to exist within ourselves, which means not depending on others — and in spirituality depending on ourselves means the Self inside me, which is my Master — then we become a permanent source of illumination to others which cannot be shaken by any force of nature. And it also becomes eternal."

8. If spirituality includes psychology, we shall also accept the existence of our human (i.e., egotistic) defensive strategies against the supraconscious, against the divine, as well as our well-known defense mechanisms against the fear due to our sexual and/or aggressive compulsions.

9. A spiritualized psychology will tend to transcend opposites and conflicts by the procedure of integration, leading to a state of *dvandvatita.*[29] This includes the capacity to let go and to constantly look for a consensus amongst people, for example in the client-therapist relationship.

10. Such a psychology should help us to avoid attachment to results. This well-known attitude of non-attachment, as Babuji defined it, should help us relate to each other in a relaxed way, with tolerance, humour and modesty.

11. A spiritualized psychology will help us to face the problem of human suffering and to firmly look towards spiritual sublimation. Western classical psychology has looked for a so-called realistic optimum quantity and quality of pleasures in the human life. Here sufferings

[29] Literally, one who has gone beyond dualities.

will tend to be accepted as well as pleasures in order to be transcended, through the mastering of pain.

12. A spiritualized psychology will include the concept of stages of morality and ethics, starting at an already high level, to transcending them.

13. Last, but not least, spiritualized psychologists should remain conscious of their limitations. The criteria of normality for human beings will not be defined within the field of psychology. These criteria will rather tend towards human perfection, which includes surrendering on our egoistic part. The consequence of such an attitude shall lead to a not egoistically desired blissful and balanced state, described so often by Chariji as the 'involutive evolution'.

At the present time, such a spiritualized psychology is not at all widespread, especially when somebody needs, or thinks he needs, professional psychotherapeutic help. We cannot then be astonished that our living spiritual guide is not encouraging us to look for such help, which most of the time is counter-productive, especially for spiritual seekers such as we are, or at least are pretending to be.[30]

The 2nd Principle:

Taking Action at the Level Where the Problem Has Arisen

Let us now introduce a second rule, which I had the pleasure of hearing directly from Chariji in October 1991 in Madras during an informal conversation: "The action must take place at the level where the problem has arisen."

---

[30] This is a particularly Western problem since, as we know, psychotherapy is not so much developed in the East.

Referring back to psychology, it implies that we should be open and sensitive enough to understand the origin of the problem(s). It implies also that we should be able to adjust to the level of consciousness of the person who requests our help.

Although it seems very simple and logical, the failure to respect this rule is responsible for most of the misunderstandings between people, something we can verify just by listening, at any time, to the conversations between two or more persons.

Let us quote Chariji once more:

"The problem is precisely here that we are at various levels and each one talks from his level."[31]

For example, when we hear someone starting his or her sentence with the words "you should", we can be almost sure that those conversing are on a different wavelength. The metaphor of switching on, or tuning in, has been used by the Hungarian psychoanalyst M. Balint, who has worked mainly with groups of general practitioners. He became famous for his work with Balint Groups on the therapeutic aspects of the doctor/patient relationship [89].

Ken Wilber elaborated this approach further, advising different types of therapeutic interventions for the different types of psychopathology. These correspond to the different 'structures of consciousness' in which people are functioning at a particular time, in a particular situation. For example, using uncovering methods such as Gestalt therapy for the level of psychoneuroses; using family therapy in the sense of communication therapy for problems of role-confusion; and

---

[31] *Proceedings of the Preceptors' Seminar*, 2-4 May 1991, Pune (India) p.305.

meditation for spontaneous emergence of psychic, or parapsychological material.

Unfortunately, even psychotherapists have a tendency to interpret body language, verbal and spiritual messages, at their own personal level of functioning, or at the level they consider in advance, for intellectual reasons, to be predominant in their clients. On the other hand, I have observed that some non-professional persons naturally choose the right answers to give to those at different levels of consciousness without knowing all these categories. Such persons are usually well-centred, open and clear. The best example of it I know is, of course, Chari, whose functioning in this respect we will try to describe later.

"A really spiritualized person is responding to the right level of answers, because such a person has attained a sufficient purity."[32]

The 3rd Principle:

Selection of Psychological Theories and Practices Compatible with Spirituality

The third principle concerning a Sahaj Marg psychology states that we may select any psychological frame of reference, model, theory, or technique coming from psychology, providing it is compatible with spiritual principles.

Perhaps an example will make it more clear: the easiest way for me to explain how we use and misuse the method, the Mission and the Master, how we resist changing our character and behaviour, is to use the concept of defense mechanisms of the ego, a concept which belongs to the Freudian psychoanalytical theory [36]. This model is

---

[32] Informal conversation, Madras, December 1992

possibly the best known and the clearest way to explain these important and unfortunate resistances, and the model I know best.

A second example: when dealing with education where it is used for a spiritual purpose, we are going to use what the neo-behaviourist school calls the learning principles. Again, the choice for this particular way of describing the facts is well-known, and clear enough to serve our purpose.

So, in other words, this third principle suggests that we give ourselves the freedom to borrow from different bodies of knowledge as needed at any particular time. It also implies the freedom to rule out what is not needed or what is incompatible with spiritual principles. These examples are voluntarily chosen because they have been directly commented on by Chari:

"Psychology... also [employs] certain therapies which make you go back into yourself. They claim, rightly or wrongly, that you can even have your own birth trauma experiences, and perhaps penetrate into the previous life, too. Again, what is the use? It is only going to tell you what was, not what is. Same thing with paleontology and geology, what was there in this period of time, what was there a thousand years or a thousand million years before that time. At best, all that they can achieve is to form some sort of a sequence leading from the past into the present. It is like saying a ladder has twenty-nine steps, but what about the further steps ahead of me? Therefore, I think, the great wisdom of my Master's teaching, 'Forget the past,' — at best, it can only offer you explanations; it cannot change anything."[33]

The following comment of Chari's, this time about transactional analysis, is very revealing, and illustrates our first and third principles together: "I have to discipline my childish part, to allow my adult part to play its rightful part."

"You know, you have this transactional analysis in psychology, which is a very crude way of doing this. The father, the son, and the child

---

[33] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.87.

figures. Sometimes one is there, sometimes the other is there. But here, we have to bring them all together into one integration — not separation, not eradication, but integration. The father is the son, the son is the father, and both are friends. Why should a father and a son not be friends? You understand, there are not three warring personalities in me. There are three competitive entities, each one wanting to hold the field. Psychology tries to bring them into a balance, spirituality brings them into one, integrates them and says, 'You are the father, you are the son, you are the Holy Ghost, you are everything,' in a way. Because otherwise you are still having three things, which are struggling for supremacy at all times."[34]

The 4th Principle:

Leadership of the Heart over the Intellect; Necessity for a Noble Character

The main purpose of a Sahaj Marg psychology is to help us to change and improve our characters and behaviour while avoiding the pitfall of unnecessary and defensive intellectualization. "Yes, this we can underline two times; on this you must insist," was Chari's reaction to the term 'unnecessary and defensive intellectualization'.

Intellectualization in itself has been considered by psychoanalysts as a defense mechanism,[35] protecting the person, more precisely the ego, from suffering from direct contact with the facts. A normal adult will use this 'advanced mechanism'. But primitive or advanced, all defense mechanisms have been created by the ego to protect itself. As a consequence, if we really want to change from an egoistic level of functioning to a spiritual one, intellectualization in this psychoanalytically defined sense, needs to be reduced, ideally abolished. In a broader sense, intellectualization is a

---

[34] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.141.

[35] I am here using the freedom provided by the third of our principles, in order to explain this fourth principle.

synonym for mentalization, i.e., just using one's mind. In that case, the mechanism is not considered as defensive in nature, but necessary for our daily lives of communication, reasoning, working, etc.

'Unnecessary and defensive intellectualization' is the mechanism of somebody who is relating to other people with his intellect rather than with his heart. He is not able to feel fully what is going on in his own heart, or in the heart of other persons and responds in intellectual terms, which do not touch the other person's heart. What the intellectualizing person is saying may be right, but it won't convey enough of the feelings that should accompany the message in order to touch the other's heart. Using a 'distancing' vocabulary does not facilitate change in behaviour, let alone character. The isolating effect of this may lead to hard-heartedness, stiffness and superficiality, since the connection with the essence, with the heart of the problems to be solved, is lost. Then, intellectualism may corrupt the basic logic and lead to lasting errors, like the famous *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am.) of René Descartes. This illusion can vanish only when we stop identifying with our intellect, which is possible when our psycho-affective state has grown sufficiently, when our desire to influence, to dominate others has been transcended. In other words, as long as we identify with our intellect, the transpersonal or spiritual realm is not accessible to us.[36] Consequently, we should not give so much importance to this linear, intellectual type of communicating with each other and decide to stop straightaway wasting time with it.

---

[36] The demonstration of the limitation of intellectualization has been splendidly made by the Madhyamika school of Mahayana Buddhism as early as two centuries A.D., mainly by Nagarjuna, through a dialectical *reductio ad absurdum* showing that "No idea is applicable to Reality itself," as Ken Wilber states, and further concludes, "Reason generates illusion, never Reality."[154]

The main danger of intellectualization is its tendency to increase and increase. The simple reason for this is that it does not give real relief to the persons involved in it, as Watzlawick states in his book *A Logic of Communication* [24]. As a result, a vicious circle is created, partly because of compensatory power seeking, so they cut themselves off from the human and divine sources of love. As an example of this danger, Chariji told the preceptors in Augerans:

"This morning somebody came to me with an apparent contradiction in what I said yesterday... We should not go into these semantics, and try to find differences where they don't exist, just out of some funny idea of seeking more explanation or conviction for yourselves. You should try to understand the basic ideas. It is like food and nourishment. Food is nourishment, but it is not nourishment for one who cannot digest the food, for instance, or for one who cannot get the food. So let us not be too grammatical in our approach to language. Let us try to find the meaning which I am trying to put before you. Please look for meanings, and not for the differences that are apparent or obvious or even hidden. Differences there will always be... So I find in these intellectual gatherings this unfortunate tendency to pick, in trying to perforate it with criticism. Everything can be criticized. There is no such thing as the perfect spoken word... So we are here to try to understand their teaching, understand the need for the teaching, understand the need for us to practise their teaching, not to adopt the attitude of critics, and say this is not in consonance with that, this is apparently contradicting what you said earlier. There will always be contradictions."[37]

Here is another warning:

"For spiritual aspirants, it is a serious deviation to follow the intellectual path. It has too many fascinations, as many have found out to their cost when it is too late. This fascination seems to grow with age, perhaps because the other fascinations need physical vigour for their gratification, and fall off when vigour diminishes, and finally become almost non-existent. The attraction of intellectual pursuits is to be guarded against, particularly by those who have serious aspirations in the field of spirituality. That all wisdom and knowledge can be available to a spiritual person has been amply proved in the experience we all have had of our beloved Babuji. Why, then, should anyone crave for intellectual

---

[37] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.172.

stimulation and gratification? This is a mystery to me. As with everything else in life, too much of anything is bad.

"We have a proverb in my mother tongue, Tamil, which says that even nectar becomes a poison if taken in excess. Master has always warned us indirectly that we should not give undue importance to the intellect. All the saints of India have warned their followers about this danger. Yet it is somewhat tragic that even in India many fall prey to this fascination. As you both know, Master did not give much importance to the spoken or the written word. It was not that He was contemptuous of knowledge. It was merely the fact of His own proven experience that whatever we need to know for our existence can be transmitted by the Master. In His own case He has written that Lalaji transmitted everything that He possessed into Him — including all the knowledge that He had. How wonderful! For such a person, it is as if the whole universe is a gigantic, all-embracing, fact-filled computer, to which He has the facility of instant access and recall. Why should such a person **know** anything? All is at his fingertips, as it were. This is what we should all aspire to. By the dedicated practise of the spiritual method given to us by our Master, the highest illumination is possible. This is an added gift, a bonus, conferred as one of the limitless number of divine gifts given or bestowed upon us by the Master, provided we have the right aspiration, the right dedication, the necessary love, patience, fortitude, and faith all backed by sincere practise of our daily sadhana. When we acquire things, we have to acquire them one by one. When He gives, He gives in such a way that the one thing that He gives, spiritual perfection, has within itself everything that this universe can possibly have, and much more than one can even imagine."[38]

What became clearer to me only recently is the fact that intellectuals have a tendency to take their intellectual 'creations' too seriously, whereas they are only useful for developing an idea about the real things we are trying to explain, and nothing more. That is why intellectuals should be, for their and our benefit, under the loving control of a Master. It is my conviction that we should also refrain from condemning intellectuals. I have heard so many confused statements on this subject and accusations of intellectualism, which masks the abhyasis' guilt or feelings of inadequacy.

---

[38] Extract of a letter to a Danish abhyasi (13 December 1983) sent to me by Liselotte Taarup.

Some of these persons refuse to read, including Sahaj Marg literature. And so they tend also to disqualify readers. However, the Mission produces books to assist abhyasis, so we should not condemn intellectuals and drive them further into their heads with the result of hardening their hearts a little more, but try to touch them. As Chariji said in an informal conversation in Manapakkam Ashram:[39] "We must touch them in their heart. That's why I don't modify my way of being or of speaking when I am warned of the presence of intellectuals."

It is necessary to use our brain but also to be conscious of its limitations, especially by remaining convinced that it is not the head which brings us to our spiritual goal. That is why Chariji has repeatedly quoted the famous statement of Vivekananda: "Intellect is useful up to a certain point." On the other hand, he encourages us to use our mental capacities properly, in a refined way, as illustrated in the following passage:

> "We shall have a higher, broader mental approach of the problem in the future. Not spiritual, because spiritual He gives, but to see problems from a higher level."[40]

So let us summarize this topic: no ostracism of intellectualization, and no fascination with it either, but as Chariji said, "Let us have a primitive heart leading a modern brain."[41]

---

[39] February 1993.

[40] Message to preceptors, in Schermau, Germany, 27 September 1992.

[41] This indicates for me that both have to work together, or as Dr. K.C. Varadachari put it: "Towards the harmonization of the two centres alone is evolution working." (*Sahaj Marg and Personality Problems and Yoga Psychology and Modern Physiological Theories*, p.200)

What Is Character?

The first essential is to define what we mean by character. Happily, Chariji has already done the job for us:

"By character formation I again emphasize this has nothing to do with moral character as such, as it is narrowly understood in India, merely referring to one's sexual morality... By character, I mean the overall personality configuration of an individual."[42]

He continues:

"Babuji always said that as long as the ego is strong, it does not let go of the particular character configuration that it has created for its display. In essence, speaking in terms of Sahaj Marg psychology,[43] I would suggest that the personality that every one of us has is created by the ego. We should not confuse it as something coming from our samskaras. It is very much like an actor on the stage putting on the clothes, and acting the particular part he has to play. There we know it; there we have to act a part for a certain number of hours, and then we take off the dress and become our normal selves.

"Here it is something which is progressively being changed to suit our ego function. You can see children when they are born, by the time they are three they develop a certain pattern of behaviour. Some are aggressive, some are soft, some are supple. At that stage it is right to say that there is some samskaric background which leads to the aggressiveness of the child or to its, you know, hiding itself, things like that. But if it gets reinforced by interaction with its family, with its society, and this sort of personality which we call character, becomes hard, established, and because the ego finds satisfaction in behaving in such ways — aggressive people are not aggressive because they want to be aggressive, they know it is damaging, but their sense of self-importance is satisfied.

"So you find children at the age of ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen, the youth behaving in funny ways, showing off. Showing off is a characteristic of the ego. It wants to be noticed, to be acknowledged, to be respected. We may show off when we are children and when we are youths, but later on we don't show off so much overtly as covertly. It becomes more dangerous. Then comes a stage at which we do not know

---

[42] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.3-4.

[43] One more proof of the existence of Sahaj Marg psychology, *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.40.

what we are doing. Inside we think we are good people, we are not aggressive, we are not impatient, we don't hate. So there is a schism between what we think we are and what we are, outwardly. The yet different third personality is what we should be inside.

"So Babuji Maharaj used to say this is how we create the thousand-headed-hydra, so to speak. And each one becomes a multiple personality with so many things inside him, each one playing its part at a particular time of the day, of the year. And the more this is allowed to proliferate, the more difficult it is to change it back into a unitary person. This is why character formation, for two reasons, is our business. One, because except for the rudimentary base we bring with us from the past life as a samskara, all the rest is the creation of the ego, which means ourselves — small. So when we have created, we have to work upon ourselves to destroy it.

"The second is: not being part of the samskaric pattern, it is not really amenable to removal by the cleaning process. That is why you find there is a peculiar, what shall I say, confusion that people are being cleaned, they receive transmission, the inner change is going on, but outwardly there is no transformation. So our friends don't accept Sahaj Marg. Our relations don't accept Sahaj Marg. Society does not accept."

Therefore, the major responsibility for character change is ours. Be truthful, Babuji advised, and this will enable us to see what needs to be changed. First, we must build the will to change ourselves, and also let the change operate on us through the process of pranahuti. As Babuji explains,

"As a result, the abhyasi begins to advance spiritually, experiencing more and more bliss. The abhyasi has only to prepare himself to receive it or, in other words, to make himself capable and deserving of it."

The Necessity for a Noble Character

Psychotherapy has so far never claimed to change the character of people. I remember, for example, the farewell speech of the last boss I had as an institutional psychiatrist, presenting the following statement as a legacy: "But the character... we must confess that psychotherapy has never been able to change a character." Of course, he was right, because we are very attached to our character, which is always, as Chariji said in Augerans in 1989, a personal

character, which means that we are very much identified with it, with the consequence that if we lose it we feel lost, we feel as if we are nobody any more, as if we are going to be dissolved.[44] In other words, to change our character we must accept a total transformation, as Chariji explained in his speech on discipline at Chittoor:

> "Outside transformation may perhaps not benefit us, which is a lurking fear in us. You see, we don't want to be straight, we don't want to be moral, we don't want to be above corruption, because we are afraid we may lose our income, we may lose our position in society."[45]

So this fourth rule appears to me to be our main challenge, and the core of our problem, because our total transformation is a must and, despite our knowledge of it, we resist part of the change when it may cost us more than we wish to lose.

Chariji made an entire speech about change in Montreal on the sixteenth of August, 1987. In the Sahaj Marg system, the preceptors have to change first. Our previous character is something we have to give to Him. What we are going to get, maybe immediately as the result of this particular kind of standard-exchange, will be this new character, the same within as without, which we have to build and which has the following features:[46]

1. It is free from internal and external shortcomings.
2. It makes the heart of the person free from emotional excitement and reaction.

> "So when we have developed our character through spiritual practice with the Master's help, we must be constant in our

---

[44] Chariji stated very simply the following in an informal conversation in Madras in January 1990: "We don't change what we are proud of."

[45] *The Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.118.

[46] These features are derived mainly from *A Preceptor's Guides*, vol. II and III.

behaviour. It cannot change according to circumstance. It cannot change according to situation."

"The more the problems outside, the stronger we must become. The more abusive the other people become, the more patient we have to become."[47]

"We shall build a character so soft that we cannot hurt it, because it should be like the air."[48]

"Instead of anger and resentment, one must cultivate in himself a meek temperament."[49]

3. It makes the person become moderate in everything, with an external serene reserve.

4. It makes the person respect etiquette (good manners), based on Sahaj Marg philosophy and principles of the Sahaj Marg system.

5. It makes the individual become a refined person in which:

"There can be no violent tendencies, there can be no violent action, there is no question of punishment."[50]

"We have to refine not only our behaviour and our character, but also our intake, physical, mental, not only our morality, but we have to refine ourselves, so that we are able to understand the teaching at the different levels in which it is given."[51]

6. As a result of the preceding point, such a refined person is going to possess what Chariji called noble qualities, i.e., higher level of character, of etiquette and of behaviour: courage, and even fearlessness,[52] truthfulness, kindness, affection, sympathy, empathy, sensitivity, simplic-

---

47 *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.300.

48 Informal conversation, Manapakkam, February 1993.

49 *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.31.

50 *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.141.

51 Ibid., p.179.

52 As Chariji recently beautifully explained in his speech in Châtel-St-Denis, 27 October 1991.

ity, patience, tolerance, openness, availability, modesty, integrity, and impartiality.

7. Last but not least, it frees the person from a criticizing and judgmental attitude.

"We have to become less and less selfish and more and more Self-like."

If we do not resist out of our fear of change, the positive qualities of this integral character, which we could perhaps also call the natural character, are going to develop, since they should be the natural outward results of the inner changes, of the spiritual changes that the Master is Himself taking care of for us:

"Character must be at the highest level of development, a shining out of your inner light."[53]

The 5th Principle:

Minimum Interference

Any psychological intervention should be conducted with a minimum of interference whether this applies to others or ourselves.

1. What makes it difficult for us to change ourselves:

- The main thing which makes it difficult to change is our ego or our self. But this easy statement doesn't help us a lot in our understanding, since it is rather general. This becomes clearer if we consider some of the barriers we create in ourselves. Freud described a number of classical defenses people use to avoid changing, such as projection, splitting, repression, undoing, isolation, reaction-

[53] *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.300.

formation, negation, disavowal, rationalization or intellectualization. It is evident that these defenses, being protective in nature, tend to interfere with reality right from the beginning, even as one initially receives the information. Conscious or unconscious conflicts are the inevitable result of defending ourselves in this way.

- Excessive emotional reactions which may even produce physical symptoms are a typical result of such inner conflicts and this may be so extreme as to overwhelm and even kill us (H. Benoit [125,126]).
- Prejudices, whether individual or as a group can result from fear and the use of projection and rationalization.
- The conventional use of language can result in a distortion of reality. We can use words which conceal and confuse as well as words which clarify things. Thinking, as expressed in language, confines us through our logic to a non-unitarian collection of things, persons, events, and connections between them. And it is these collections that we confuse with reality.

2. Interference with and within others.

In our relationships, it is easy to understand that the same mechanisms (i.e., our emotions, our defenses, our prejudices, judgments, linguistic conditioning, etc.), are active and can give rise to interference with others, resulting in misunderstandings, conflicts, frictions, struggles, even murders and war.

Some attempts to develop a psychology and a psychotherapy characterized by a minimal interference, have already been made in the West. In the early part of this century, psychoanalysts produced limited success. During the sixties and seventies, under the influence of general systems theory, cybernetics, and the information theory, family therapy had

growing success. This was mainly due to the fact that the reduction of interference was part of its aim and technique, even though family therapists and theoreticians didn't name it that way.

More recently, the influence of traditional universal wisdom on psychotherapeutic principles has increased. As an illustrative example, there is the suggestive *Psychology in the Spirit of the Tao-Te-Ching* [36] by Guy Johanson et al. In this book, the authors describe how the therapists try to behave themselves in a way consistent with the reality of the Tao, with Buddhist principles, and also with wisdom derived from the American Hopi Indian culture. The latter is based on such principles as mind-body-spirit unity, non-violence, mindfulness and the capacity to bring about order because of the presence of an inner strength, pushing human beings towards perfection.

Working as a psychotherapist in close collaboration with a physiotherapist combining bodywork with psychotherapy (Eutonia) [4], I found this principle of minimum interference to be a useful tool. It has helped me to remain quiet and non-affected when I am attacked by clients as they transfer violent emotions on to me. I try to do the same in my life as a father, husband, or abhyasi.

These examples show to some extent a more positive direction in modern psychology which compensate for the over-use of more forceful methods, including some which claim to lead to spirituality, but are confused with what Ken Wilber called the Transpersonal Band [131,154].

"You don't use a crane to pick up a needle from the floor," says Babuji, "You see, it is a matter of utilization of energy, conservation of energy."

After quoting his Master, Chariji added during a speech at the Atlanta Ashram on the tenth of February, 1992:

"It is a principle of conservation of energy that what I am doing must be done with the minimum of energy that is required, not the maximum of energy that is required."

Of course, such a way of behaving implies the ability to remain in a state of balance, where one is able to act from the 'extreme centre'. Such a feat is possible when we are in remembrance, which may become, as we know, a permanent state. In other words, this principle of minimum interference is a principle which implies the adoption of the philosophy of the dynamically balanced way, with the two wings of the bird, if we refer to Sahaj Marg philosophy. In the Taoist tradition, the concept of *wu-wei* has been developed in order to help us let go of our own subjectivity, even the one consisting of the desire to get rid of the ego. As explained by K. Wilber [154], *wu-wei* means:

"No intentional or forced activity, non-interference — wu-wei represents the art of letting the mind[54] alone, of letting it move as it will, of not forcing it, or restraining it, of totally authorizing all the mind's tendencies in a moment of perfect impartiality."

This implies the so-called 'forgetting' or 'mind-fasting', as explained by Chung Tzu, quoted by K. Wilber [154]:

"Make your will one! Hear not with your ears, but with your mind; rather, not with your mind, but with your spirit. Let your hearing stop with the ears, and let your mind stop with its images. Let your spirit, however, be like a blank, passively responsive to externals. In such open receptivity only can Tao abide. And that open receptivity is the fasting of the mind."

This efficient active-passivity does not imply that no action can come from such elevated individuals. On the contrary, very effective actions will happen in their appropriate time, but in a non-forceful, elegant, simple, natural way, and in a state of balance, as Babuji used to call it:

---

[54] And not the intellect!

"We thus enter a state of oblivion where self is totally forgotten, and the consciousness of the body or the soul is all gone. The impressions of existence which encumber the heart are all washed away... He does things which leave no impression upon him... At this stage the man attains an almost balanced state similar to that which prevailed before the creation came into existence. His heart is quite calm, and the mind disciplined.[55]

"A person who is in the state of negation should automatically become sorrowful when he sees the sorrow of others and delighted by seeing the delight of others; but this should be only superficial and afterwards he should revert again to his 'as he is' condition."[56]

No doubt at this stage, which includes self-surrender, one would be a perfect psychologist and psychotherapist. Such individuals never provoke disturbance in their relationships. Their actions, whether verbal or otherwise, are always adapted to the other, in the sense that their spoken and silent suggestions, their observations and remarks will promote change, will push others a bit further or higher, will stimulate their growth, their evolution. This is performed without provoking significant resistance. With minimum interference such persons will produce the best effect without looking for results.

This is possible only if our hearts are sufficiently unencumbered by grossness, since no clear information can be tapped if the person is not pure enough. The second condition is that our hearts be open enough, able to give continuously. In other words, this openness leads us to behave generously in a smooth and natural way, as Chariji stated in a speech in Châtel-St-Denis, Switzerland, on the twentieth of October, 1991:

"A heart is never a male or a female heart, it is a human heart. So we have to learn to trust, to learn to depend on others, to learn to give, give, give, give unendingly. Because the most subtle is the most difficult, and

---

[55] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.258.

[56] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.362-363.

to conduct it out of ourselves, to become a channel for the Divine essence, this must always be open."

So cleanness and openness are necessary qualities of this very important principle of minimum interference. These minimally non-interfering tools take on spiritual characteristics once they have become sufficiently subtle. This, of course, is taken for granted in one who is permitted to transmit pranahuti, the divine love of the Master. Besides transmission, the two other 'tools' in this respect are prayer and positive suggestions. I remember Chariji commenting in Augerans:[57]

"In spirituality, we allow things to happen."

This statement was an answer to some abhyasi who wanted to bring another abhyasi in immediately for a discussion with Chari, with the risk of forcing this abhyasi. Of course, less than two minutes later, the abhyasi came of his own accord.

On another occasion Chariji said:

"What I mean to suggest is that if you utilize the parallel from the engineering sciences, especially the science of transmission of energy, a perfect system should not develop heat at all... That is why the personal qualities about which I spoke on the first day are so important, you see, character formation, self-regulation, modifying our behaviour, etiquette, love, compassion, mercy, all to be transmitted through ourselves undiluted by us, nothing held back for ourselves."[58]

This is, only if we are "open with the heart, not just with the intellect,"[59] so that the effect on others is not a disturbing, hurting, or merely unnecessary one. This idea is well summarized by Chari, speaking of the Master:

"He does not interfere with what need not be changed in us."[60]

---

57 Informal conversation, July 1990.

58 *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.65.

59 Ibid., p.64.

60 *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.28.

— 3 —

Some Useful Roles of Psychology in Spirituality

- Role of Preparation
- Role of Education
- Role of Prevention
- Role of Correction and Treatment

We must conclude that psychology has only one role, which includes the others, namely to be in the service of spirituality, or even to be considered as part of it, perhaps the 'lower' part of it. So what kind of services can psychology offer?

Role of Preparation

A role of preparation for starting is present in many acts of daily life and here we explore it in two ways:

1. The preparation of human beings for starting spiritual practice.
2. The preparation we go through at one particular spiritual stage, in order to be able to approach the next one.

Role of preparation for starting spiritual practice: This raises the question of what we consider to be a good preparation for spiritual practice. Such criteria are not explicitly mentioned in the Sahaj Marg literature. We rather have the minimal requirement, as referred to for example by Chari:

"When people would ask my Master, 'Am I fit for this yoga?,' He always said, 'If you are a human being and if you are willing to practise it, yes.' These are the only two requirements."[61]

Of course, it already implies that we should be fully developed human beings, which in the same speech Chariji explains as the requirement for having a mind. This excludes mentally disturbed persons, at least while acute disturbance lasts. A little later, he goes further and explains:

"There is nothing which differentiates us from the animal kingdom except two things — the intellect and the will. These are attributes of the mind. So on one side we have the intellect, which is a judgmental system given to us to say this is good, this is bad, this is right, this is wrong. And on the other side the will power to enforce or give us the ability to achieve that which is good, that which is right, and neglect or renounce that which is not good for us."

The Sahaj Marg literature makes it clear that humanization must have evolved before divinisation can take place. In his New Year's Message of December 1991, however, Chariji gave some more restrictive advice:

"I have been hearing that the Mission is growing by leaps and bounds. Mostly people refer to the growth in the number of centres everywhere and in the number of abhyasis. This is of course to be welcomed, since the Mission is here to serve all of humanity. At the same time, we must not forget the caution that Babuji Maharaj, my Divine Master, has given us when he said that quality must be important, and not quantity. I believe therefore that our preceptors must be very wary when admitting new abhyasis, to see that people who cannot be helped are not there.

"I am specifically referring to people with mental problems, and who have undergone mental treatment in hospitals and psychiatry clinics. There are more and more of such cases, and it must be strictly understood by preceptors and by all that such people are only to be helped directly by my Master."

In another speech already mentioned about discipline, he quotes Vivekananda:

---

[61] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VI, p.135.

"Let us have men first, people who have morality, people who have integrity, people who have faith, let them not be spiritual at all." [62]

Let us now compare these statements with those stemming from developmental psychology in order to see if we can now define what a good preparation would be, or should be, in a psychological vocabulary.

If we refer to the states of consciousness in Ken Wilber's Spectrum [154], it would be logical to state that the so-called 'pre-personal' states of consciousness are not appropriate for jumping directly into a spiritual practice, since the maturity of the self is not realised enough: at its extreme, the baby in its so-called autistic state is not at all fit for spiritual practice, since it cannot use its own mind.

So we should rather infer that the higher a person is situated and functioning in the personal realm of consciousness, the better the preparation is for jumping to the next step, which is called 'psychic' by Ken Wilber and constitutes the onset of spirituality, called here the 'transpersonal realm of consciousness'.

The most evolved of the psychological or personal states, still in the duality of Maya, is called by Wilber the existential state. This corresponds in Shri Aurobindo's system to the so-called higher-mind, [109,110] and to the *manas* in the Buddhist Mahayana system. Western psychology describes this as the adult state, the final state of development for human beings, corresponding to the 'self-actualization' of Maslow [83,190].

J. Engler summarizes his view on this question of preparation in a forceful slogan: "You must be somebody before you become nobody."[158] As a clinical psychologist,

---

[62] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.116.

and also a teacher in Vipassana meditation, or insight-meditation, he has pointed out the danger of psychological regressions with persons who are not sufficiently matured. This applies to borderline or narcissistic personalities, who are often attracted by meditation. I have observed such abhyasis in the Sahaj Marg system as follows:

- Candidate abhyasis with psychological handicaps which may cause them to renounce the practice when they are faced with the details of our discipline.
- Those who start nevertheless and constitute early dropouts.[63]
- Those who continue, usually with great difficulties and suffering, but nonetheless sometimes with great success in their psychological progress. This can be considered the result of the efficacy and specificities of the Sahaj Marg system, because of cleaning and transmission, and the special help of a living Master who doesn't cut, choose, or select those who are allowed to come, according to the following quotation of Chari:

> "Therefore, we have to be broad-minded, large-hearted, open-hearted. 'Come unto me,' you see, this famous figure of Christ. What does it mean? All are welcome. For him there was no distinction of on whom he could work, on whom he could not work. If he could raise up a Lazarus, surely he could raise up anything else. We deny that possibility when we become selective, choosy, nationalistic, etc."[64]

So far, we have not said anything about the way this preparation for spirituality usually takes place. The first

---

[63] J. Engler made the same observation in the follow-up of such meditators in the Vipassana tradition [158].

[64] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.109.

group are those who grow naturally, going from one state to the next, or sometimes the stage or preparation is accompanied by some crisis, manifestations related to what Assagioli has called 'spiritual awakening'. [183] In the West, I consider that less than five per cent of the population is able to attain through this natural growth the existential stage (Wilber). This involves suffering, with the feeling that something of a higher order is lacking despite being otherwise healthy and well. It is my feeling that this five per cent of persons come from a psychologically favoured environment and a healthy family background.

Others seem to grow through an apparently self-made evolution, in which significant encounters nevertheless seem almost always to have played a role.

Other people must be helped to reach this existential level by different kinds of psychotherapies. What I can say as a psychiatrist is that some of the people with whom I have worked can progress only one step at a time, asking not to be pushed ahead of themselves. I also observed that the majority of these clients who became abhyasis at the end, or towards the end, of their treatment seemed to do pretty well later on their spiritual path.

Some people may come for psychological help after the quest for spirituality has begun. Some proceed with their psychotherapy while also practising spirituality. But then treatment is not easy because they are accustomed to using spirituality defensively, in order to protect their inflated ego, as Assagioli and Chögyam Trungpa have also mentioned.[65] In

---

[65] Assagioli describes the cases where both regressive tendencies and progressive growth are present as a complication [183]. Chögyam Trungpa, in his book called *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* [196], describes several ways our tricky ego tries to recuperate spirituality for its own benefit, hence sabotaging our process of transformation, which includes letting go of

some other cases, they will quit spirituality and feel 'let down'.[66] Let us add that it is not necessary to be in psychotherapy to defend oneself by pseudo-spiritual reasoning, refusing to see a very obvious psychological problem, conflict or shortcoming of one's own creation.

---

what he calls the 'watcher'. As the author says, "Ego is always trying to achieve spirituality. It is rather like wanting to witness your own funeral."

[66] I had to answer some questions, during the panel following an MD-56 session after the speech given 8 October 1991 in Hyderabad, concerning these so-called 'levels of consciousness', so I will repeat below the same things in a different form: in fact, we go from a rather closed primitive level of consciousness when we are born, to further levels, which are more and more open, and contain the preceding ones. Most people stop at the 'ego level', a personal neurotic stage, or individualistic stage. Some stop even before, at what we call pre-personal stages, which are considered as psychopathological in nature, since these persons have heavy difficulties surviving and are also heavy loads for their family and close associates, who are not always able to cope with them at all; otherwise they are transiently, or more or less permanently, taken in charge by psychiatrical structures, at least in the industrialized countries of the West. Luckier are the persons whose samskaras lead them to find a Master of calibre, able to guide them in quitting the realm of what has been called here psychology, for spirituality, and even for further 'realms of consciousness' called, for example, Reality and Bliss in the Sahaj Marg system.

Now I have said that the highest stage in the realm of psychology has been called the existential state of consciousness. At this level, the main motivation of the person is directed towards the finding of a solution to existential problems, i.e., regarding death and suffering, regarding the purpose of human life, etc.

So in some way, each abhyasi has more or less reached this existential level, has at least partly identified with this level of consciousness. Otherwise he or she would not have started meditation. But most of the time all our psychological energy, or the main part of our consciousness, is not concentrated in this psychological region. As a consequence we tend to function most of the time at the level of consciousness we are mostly in. Starting from this level, when the conditions are favourable, we are able to momentarily fluctuate up to this existential level, or even, as a flash, up to a psychic level, often called a 'peak experience', in a so-called altered state of consciousness.

The Preparation During the Spiritual Path

"It does not matter why they come to me. Once they come, if they stay long enough they will come to the spiritual way,"[67] Babuji said.

I think that this confirms that when most of us joined the Mission, we were not at this last personal or psychological stage we called the existential level, stamping impatiently for merger with the Divine. In other words, our preparation has been partly or mostly done after our introduction, under the direction of our spiritual guide. As Babuji so nicely summarizes:

"Most often, people enter the Master's sphere having with them all their belongings, causing thereby considerable delay."[68]

Babuji's description of the different types of *sadhaka*, his model of the different types of disciples also shows us that we can evolve from one type to another type, up to the mature stage. Implicitly it means that this process of preparation from a state, or a stage, to another stage is present during our whole evolution on this ladder, conducting us from the lowest pre-personal psychological stage to the highest spiritual state.

The following quotation of Chari's will give us a complete overview of this evolution:

"How to prepare ourselves? The lowest level is, of course, becoming an abhyasi. I enroll myself, take my three sittings, put on the badge, and I am an abhyasi. But that is only the first step. If you stop there, and become petrified there, you remain a statue on the first step of the temple. If you progress a little, adopt the practice, with perhaps many differences of opinion, many doubts, perhaps you will climb up to the second step. There you will become petrified and become the statue on the second step.

---

[67] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.198.

[68] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.13.

"You proceed a little further, put your heart into the practice, but yet you remain as a beggar; on the third step you will be petrified, and now you will be holding out a beggar's bowl in your hand, and there is a new statue once more. But you stop begging, go to the next level and you become a friend, but there you stop, you're just a friend and nothing more. There you are petrified as a friend. Smiling countenance, good clothes he has given you, well nourished by the food he has given you, but nevertheless only a friend. He is my friend; I can never be his friend. This must be remembered. Because he can give his life for me; I can never give my life for him. I have my life to distribute to so many people: my beloved, my lovers, my girlfriends, my boyfriends, my children, my uncles and aunts; also to those whom I hate profoundly I have to give so many things back, my hatred, my violence, my ignorance.

"So until I can give my life for my Master, I have no right to call myself a friend. You know, friendship is not always reciprocal, perhaps never reciprocal. Therefore it is absurd, it is irreverent, to say you are a friend of the Master. Yes, he is your friend, but you are not his friend. So you see, we can never be friends in that sense. He treats me as a friend, because he can give his life for me. When I can give my life for him, without a moment's thought, then I can claim that friendship for myself.

"So we have to go beyond that. It must be a momentary thing, 'Yes, he is my friend. I am his friend, too.' 'Chari, after all when we are friends, aren't we friends of each other?' This is a common human conception, but not at that level. Then we have to become that beautiful thing, one who loves, and he keeps climbing up the stairs. This I believe is also the portraiture that is employed in Hindu temples, when you find statues on both sides of the steps leading up to a temple. Perhaps! I don't know what they meant, but this is the meaning that I derive, that here are these poor people, seekers who came seeking not for what he could give, but for what they wanted, and each one stopped at the level of his aspiration to take up life again when the Divine touch shall animate them afresh.

"And once you are able to adore him, and see him as the very Divine, the Divine is my — he treats me as his friend but to me he is always the divine — at that stage you come to the portal of His immense presence, of His noble presence. It is a long way, but it is also very short."[69]

So let us try to see how this preparation is viewed in developmental psychology, and how it compares with the preceding description of Chari, and with the spiritual stages

---

[69] *A Preceptor's Guide* , vol. III, p.180-181.

Babuji has described in the so-called stages on the path of realisation.[70]

Let us quote Ken Wilber [158]:

"If, however, the central self is to ascend the hierarchy of basic structural development — to grow — then eventually it must release or negate its exclusive identification with its present basic rung in the developmental ladder. It must accept the 'death', negation, or release of the lower level, it must dis-identify with or detach from an exclusive involvement with that level — in order to ascend to the greater unity, differentiation, and integration of the next higher basic level."

According to this description, preparation could be considered as this phase of detaching from our involvement in a particular state of self-development or consciousness, in order to be able to go further.

"Negation is really nothing but nullifying the energy which had contributed to the formation of the solid form or the positive phase," says Babuji. "The positiveness is lost, and a state of uniformity is introduced which establishes a closer contact with the Real... Negation means giving up or becoming poor and destitute of all which constituted one's apparent being, i.e., materiality. Without negation no unfolding of knots and no expansion can ever be possible."[71]

The Role of Education

As we know, the word education comes from the Latin root *educo* — to bring out, to draw forth. Of course, education may claim to be a discipline in itself, separated from psychology, but it is obvious that these disciplines are cousins, and that in clinical psychology, in psychotherapy, there is always an educational part, whose aim is usually considered to promote the formation and the development of the human being on the physical, moral, and intellectual

---

[70] Stages on the Path of Realisation, *Complete Works of Ram Chandra,* vol. I, p. 372-5.

[71] *Deva Vani,* p.246-247.

levels, in the direction of individual perfection. In this conventional definition, spiritual education is not taken into account, although individual perfection is mentioned. Anyway, according to the first principle described in the previous chapter, a truly spiritualized psychology may also claim what could be called a spiritual education.

Another similarity between these close disciplines of education and psychology is that both elicit resistance in ourselves, as Chariji once explained in an informal conversation in Madras on the ninth of April 1992:

"The ego doesn't want education, which is painful; one because there is an effort, and two, because it is against the ego, which claims to know already everything. I say: 'For heaven's sake, why all this?' So school, schedules, discipline have been organized by humankind in order to train the ego to accept education — that is, to learn something."

Teaching

It is common sense to consider teaching as a tool of education, and we know that an important part of the time that gurus spend with their disciples is used for their education by means of teaching. In the Sahaj Marg lineage, our Masters are not failing in this rule. For example, Chariji has given seven speeches in Augerans (July 9-16, 1991); in the first speech he made some comments about teaching, regarding:

1. The necessity for teachers to be creative.
2. The necessity for participants to understand their own roles, (for example, their responsibility in trying to understand what is taught and in clarifying what their needs are).
3. The necessity of avoiding any forcing in education.
4. The necessity of considering comprehensive understanding with the heart as fundamental in education, starting

with the common understanding between students and teachers, in the sense of a "pure, free and frank relationship in order to exchange ideas, thoughts, knowledge, and understanding itself."

5. The necessity of avoiding systematic disqualification, which he disqualified himself by calling it "tearing down things to bits and pieces, analyzing them mercilessly."
6. The necessity of trying to answer the question why instead of how, in order to avoid stagnation or even aggravation, by going from mistake to mistake.
7. The necessity for a full commitment from both students and teachers, who should in addition make the teaching acceptable in some way.[72]

The following extracts, to which I fully subscribe, are from Liselotte Taarup, a Danish preceptor involved in teaching:

"To push an abhyasi to be willing to learn and to understand, to teach what they are not willing to learn means the teaching work has to be an act of art. It has to be done. It will always be done by the spiritual guide."

"They, Babuji and Chariji, are better than the best teachers in performing this 'act of education' as an act of art; such teachers should we be. Then we can start teaching with a real effect. It is teaching with humour, it is an elegant teaching also, it is hints and knowledge, it is everything and a thinking process also for all. We have to be artists in teaching."

"A teacher should be as a juggler and better than the best, who can catch nine balls. A spiritual teacher has to catch much more. Therefore, a teacher has to be spiritual, sensitive, and with a clear mind which can receive the impulse from a brighter consciousness."

"You can't give a description of such a teacher, as you can't give a description of Mozart — it is too complex. You can't communicate a

---

[72] Of course, at this very moment, I can't avoid asking myself and you if this present teaching is acceptable!

painting — a picture — with words or in telling which colours and techniques are used."

"Somebody should write about how he is doing his teaching work. He is often teaching one, in teaching somebody else, but 'the one' is listening. He is teaching a group and all are listening, also 'the one'. He is honest and the teaching is honest, but if it is too honest in any moment, because the abhyasis can't bear it, he will choose another method, because he knows the abhyasis will run away immediately."

" A Sahaj Marg teacher must develop a lot of automatic tricks which are not dishonest, but sensitive."

"It is un-attention in attention, working. Un-attention hurts if it is alone. It hurts the ego. But he is a teacher. He is a masterly teacher."

Says Chari:

"True teaching is when you don't teach but the student learns."

Modeling

This remark permits us to make a transition from teaching to imitation and modeling, by using another quotation from the same speech of Chari:

"A true guide is not so much a teacher as an example."[73]

In psychology, imitation and modeling have also been considered important and powerful learning principles. Such learning is durable, probably because this process does not consist of mere mimicking, but includes interiorization of the model and identification with the model. It is not merely superficial learning as is produced by using some other learning principles like operant conditioning.

---

[73] Speech in Augerans, July 1991. I am conscious of not having covered teaching exhaustively, having rather selected some aspects of it, at least if one refers to the four ways of teaching in the Indian tradition, i.e. *Sama* (the way of persuasion), *Dana* (giving), *Bheda* (debate, discussion), and *Danda* (suitable administered punishment), as P. Rajagopalachari explained in Little Grove in 1987 (*Heart to Heart*, vol. I, page 351).

In Sahaj Marg, the Master is not the only example for his abhyasis, but preceptors and abhyasis are also expected to be models. As Chariji said in a speech in Anand (February 1987) called "Spirituality — Its Relevance":

"The first essential fact: that I must be that which I choose to develop in somebody else... prepare yourself first and then deal with others. That is why the saints of the past said, 'Be this first and then try to change humanity.'"[74]

Operant Conditioning

Operant conditioning or Skinnerian conditioning [27,28], roughly speaking, consists of promoting a behaviour by rewarding it as soon as possible after it has been produced, so that it is reinforced. This is, of course, a learning principle we use all the time with children in family life, in school, at work, in society, and with ourselves, through different means, varying from a material reinforcement like money, to secret thoughts of self-satisfaction.

Our Masters are also using operant conditioning with their abhyasis, for example by praising them when they behave correctly or really progress, which is at the same time a means of increasing discrimination in them, and in the members of the audience. As Chariji said in an informal talk in January 1990 in Madras:

"Discrimination is useful to choose what is leading us to the goal, from what is not."

Classical Conditioning

Classical, or Pavlovian conditioning [29] consists of the repetition of the same experience, so that a neutral stimulus, like the sound of a bell, for example, becomes a conditioned

---

[74] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VI, p.197.

stimulus for the emission of a response. Such a response was the salivation of the dog in Pavlov's famous experiments. To some extent, such a conditioning could be at work when we practise our sadhana as prescribed, in a particular place, at a regular time, on the same seat, so that the desired responses are facilitated. But of course, this phenomenon of classical conditioning cannot be considered as something which explains or creates meditation of itself, as clearly underlined by Chariji:

"We should have a place for meditation. Babuji said, 'Have a separate place so that, when you go there, you get into the mood for meditation.' Only the mood for meditation, then the rest is up to you. It is not conditioned by the place, you understand. If I am dependent on the place, what happens if I have to move out of that house? Shall I say, 'No, no. I will not be able to meditate any more!' It is why we avoid music, avoid everything. In the Sufi tradition they have music to do meditation. We don't believe in it because then it is conditioned. If the music changes, I cannot meditate. If there is no music, I cannot meditate."

Punishment

Punishment is also a learning principle [28] which raises in us emotional reactions and ethical questions. But it is known in experimental and clinical psychology that punishment must be intense and immediate to be efficient in suppressing behaviour, and administered in a way permitting a clear discrimination between the target behaviour and other behaviour if one wants to avoid a generalization of the suppression of behaviour. Beaten children, for example, have often developed such a generalization[75] in the form of inhibition and shyness.

---

[75] Generalization and discrimination are opposite learning principles. A particular case of generalization may be called 'abusive generalization' which we will mention later in the misuses of the Mission.

In Sahaj Marg, it has been said many times that in spirituality the threat of divine punishment is not used, as it has been often the case in the history of religions.[76] As Chariji said:

"It is a great misconception to think that God punishes or that God rewards."[77]

So punishment comes from another source, i.e., a human source:

"There will come a time when we shall have to suffer the consequences of our own sins, of our own viciousness, of our corruption, not as a punishment from Him but as an act of self-condemnation imposed by ourselves upon ourselves."[78]

But what about the Master Himself as a source of punishment? Again we are going to quote Chari:

"I was originally worried over the concept that Nature can punish me when Master is willing to forgive me! Then I understood, when we commit mistakes with impunity, it is the same Master who forgives us in his waking state, can punish us from His unconscious, subconscious, super-conscious levels, because there is only one law behind that. Are we deserving punishment? Then He is not going to have mercy on us. If we are deserving it, we get it."[79]

I would like to end this topic of punishment aspect with a loving aspect, through another quotation from Chari:

"In India, they have always held this belief, you see, that there are four ways of teaching: *sama, dana, bheda* and *danda*. One is by the way

---

[76] Let us point out here that these facts are not mentioned as an attack on the religious spirit or the religious inclination of mankind. They are considered here as the consequence of the dualistic tendencies that prevail as soon as a spiritual teaching is institutionalized in the absence of a living Master. For example, you can't describe a loving, compassionate, all-merciful God without creating His complementary qualities, since such an entity deals with the manifest reality, i.e., *maya*.

[77] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.145.

[78] Ibid., p166.

[79] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. IV, p.127.

of persuasion, one is by giving, the other is by debate and discussion, and the fourth is by suitably administered punishment (suitably administered for the good of the child, not for our anger). The whole problem is we vent our anger against the child. We are not correcting the child. We are working our anger on the child. That is wrong. And they should be trained in that order, too. Start with persuasion. **Last thing to be used is punishment.**[80] Persuade, then try to love the child. 'No, no, darling, it should not be this, you see how mommy does it.' If not, then discuss, if the child is old enough to discuss. 'Do you know what would be the consequences? You don't do it.' Then finally you say, 'Well, I have tried all the ways that I know. Please hold out your hand.' It's always been the traditional thing, you know. The first essential fact: that I must be that which I choose to. But the trouble is, in this world we confuse love with non-punishment. That is, where there is love there should be no measure of correction. No means of correction at all. But on the contrary, in the East we believe that only one who loves can beat a child. Because he is so involved with its future, its right behaviour, its prosperity, that he alone can take the risk of punishing it."

Here is a last quotation from Chari, which shows that there are different levels of teaching, from which we have to make a whole for ourselves, in a process of creation:

"Punishment is a part of the way of teaching people about power."[81]

Extinction

A behaviour becomes extinct when it is no longer rewarded. I think this principle takes place each time we meditate, each time we are in remembrance, by contributing to the extinction of those habits which make up our false identity, called ego. The natural renunciation *(vairâgya)* can also be considered as extinction of desires.

Communication

The psychological study of usual human communication has shown that:

---

[80] Emphasized by us.

[81] Informal conversation, Madras, April 1992.

- We cannot avoid communicating even if we try to, for example by silence, because we inevitably send signals in the course of any relationship with another. The context within which communication happens and the feelings and emotions of the persons concerned are usually more important than the information being passed. For example, if my relationship with another person is characterized by rivalry, then the effectiveness of our communication will be very poor.
- Being able to recognize this is essential in order to move from one type of relationship to a higher one. It helps to cut endless 'games' between people. For example, when two people who are caught in a so-called symmetrical type of relationship [24] (characterized by rivalry) are able to discuss their endless game itself, before it becomes a war.
- Direct communication must be distinguished from indirect communication. In the former, information is ideally given at the same time, in the same place, to all persons concerned, whereas in the latter, messengers are used, usually because of psychological problems between some of the people involved in the interactions. An 'adult' group will preferably use direct communication, because such a group will usually give as precise and clear information as is necessary for the various situations at hand. On the contrary, when the group is not mature enough, i.e., when their members have not solved their main psychological problems, they will tend to communicate indirectly, leading to problems.

On our spiritual path, communication is an important aspect, including selective silencing, as testified by the two following extracts from speeches by Chari:

"I said I have many things to say and I don't know where to begin. And I was also thinking of something which Babuji Maharaj told me long ago, that, 'Often, the things that we don't say are more important than the things that we say.' So it's a question of having to balance the spoken with the unspoken. I have not been able to master that art. I have still to depend on saying things. Maybe a time will come when I won't have to speak so much."[82]

"There is communication with the self, there is communication with the other, and there is communication with the Ultimate. I don't know; I have never attended courses on communication. There are, I believe, nowadays in modern times, institutes of communication. I don't know what they teach but it is my analysis: that there are three levels of communication: with the self, with the other, and with Him. With the self, speech can be silent in the form of thoughts, daydreams, night dreams, too, during sleep, when the subconscious is trying to communicate with my consciousness, give me messages, give me warnings, give me support. Communication with the other: in speech, in physical ways, as also perhaps as we develop in our love for each other, falling or lapsing into silence. But **there** [with Him], the only communication can be silence; we cannot possibly speak with God. Therefore, as a true Sahaj Marg, one cannot possibly believe in all the myths and stories that the prophets of the past spoke with God. I totally disbelieve such nonsense, whether it be the Hindu tradition or the Christian tradition, or any other tradition in this world. One cannot possibly speak with God. God has no voice. God has no language. So how can you speak with God?"

"So this is the... you can call it the psychology or the philosophy behind communication: that unless we become so simple that in each of us there is nothing but Him, then we speak with the voice of duality — my voice and his voice, my thoughts and his thoughts, my way of communication and his way of communication."

"Therefore, we find this anomaly that all these traditions speak of their great savants, their saints, their seers, their prophets having gone into the desert or withdrawn up onto the mountain peak and there communicated with God through the act of meditation. And then we find a little lie creeping into the situation that when they come back either they said, or somebody said: so-and-so had spoken with God. The right way would perhaps be to say they had communicated with God. So when we want to communicate with the Ultimate it is only through meditation, through stilling ourselves into silence. Now does this silence mean only verbal silence, where our mouth is closed and we make no noises? I think

---

[82] *Love and Death*, p.105.

not. I think we have to go deeper and deeper into the various hidden layers of silence. Where first the voice is stilled, next the mind is stilled, third, perhaps even the soul has to be stilled."[83]

Explaining, Analyzing, Interpreting, and Introspecting

We must connect the above to some related actions like clarifying, discriminating, analyzing, interpreting, and reasoning. The first thing I would like to underline here is the usefulness of these five tools, and also their necessity in a spiritual activity. If you take, for instance, the technical aspect of our sadhana, how can you avoid explaining the cleaning process? It is at the present time impossible. What would a speech look like without its explaining, clarifying, reasoning, and discriminating parts? As soon as we use any language in order to communicate, we are inevitably using these means.

I can give here two examples of the help I received personally when reading Sahaj Marg literature. The first example is about mergence, which used to frighten me because I was often having fantasies of a brutal dissolution of myself, i.e., of my ego. And I can tell you that when I read Chari's speech called "Path Within That Reveals,"[84] it gave me relief. Of course, I didn't merge straightaway as a result of this reading, but this problem didn't bother me any more. Here is the explanation he gave:

"Then comes the next stage, learning from Him, trying to emulate Him, following Him, becoming like Him, and ultimately merging with Him, which means (not of course a physical union, nor a spiritual union even) to evolve to such an extent, to such a level, that between Him and this disciple, there is no difference, intrinsically there is no difference."

---

[83] *Heart to Heart*, vol. I, pp.286, 284,287.

[84] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. V (Bangalore, 14 September 1986)

Of course, compared to direct spiritual revelation or direct 'reality-testing', these psychological tools, like explaining or clarifying, are partial truths, but on the other hand, how many can claim to be constantly or even frequently in direct contact with Reality? That is why I think we should not create unnecessary duality between these two complementary ways of understanding, of growing, of rapidly or slowly unifying ourselves, 'brick by brick' as Chariji often says.

Being a typical Westerner afraid to lose his ego, I was further reassured when I heard Chariji saying that in Sahaj Marg, "We are not trying to kill the ego, but to refine it."

So reassurance is a possible benefit we can get from those psychological tools all Masters use because they have to adjust to our level of comprehension at a given time, and try with appropriate means to put us sufficiently at ease that we will allow Him to raise us a little bit.

Not all the explanations or clarifications we hear or read are comforting to us. In fact, emotional reactions such as fear or anger can also be triggered, as can a mixture of different emotions resulting in confusion. But usually these aggravations are transient, something Chariji himself explained very nicely by using the analogy of homeopathic treatment, which very frequently (as pranahuti itself does) provokes transient aggravation of our symptoms.[85] So that what first comes as increased anxiety may turn into joyous expectation later on, since it announces a coming change. As for myself, being reminded of this very well known phenomenon helped me to

---

[85] We are going to go a little further into change and symptoms when we deal with these concepts in special chapters later on. Let us just add for the moment that a **symptom** can be considered either to be an alarm signal pushing us towards some change(s), or as the price we are accepting to pay for refusing to change.

understand and hence diminish my suffering upon various occasions.

Many examples can be given of how our behaviour can lose at least some of its fascination by being made conscious, such as how desires for power are usually a compulsion for controlling others because of inner insecurity, etc.

Analyzing and interpreting are usually considered pejorative, especially in regard to psychoanalysis, which has cherished interpretation and made it a favourite tool. However, when we say that we have to analyze a situation before making a decision, nobody objects. So I would like to warn against the abuse of both extremes and suggest that analyzing one's psychological situation is correct if done in order to, as Chariji says, "Recognize the problem and clean it away."[86] But when it is over-done, it is useless or even harmful. Interpreting is a more delicate and risky operation, and I think we should be more cautious about it. Interpretation is a verbal communication made by the psychotherapist to the client, to explain to him the underlying meaning of what he says or does, and his defensive conflicts and underlying desires.[87]

For instance, recently I told a woman of around thirty, who is now able to see, how she undermines her husband, especially in the presence of her own mother:

"If we put together all these things you told me, it seems to me that you have been afraid to support your husband in the presence of your mother, maybe to avoid her jealousy. Starting from your adolescence, maybe even earlier, you solved the problem by cutting yourself in two parts, so that you couldn't fully engage yourself in a marital relationship, hence these repetitive love affairs with old men, who were people that

---

[86] Informal conversation, Madras, May 1991.

[87] Inspired and translated from *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse* (J. Laplanche and J-B Pontalis, Puf 1971).

you knew your mother was not interested in herself, so there was no risk of having to compete with her."

Now since the analysis of the situation was correct for her level of consciousness and since our relationship was positive, this interpretation was received without resistance. The patient said that she never understood this before but that it would explain such and such a detail, so that during further sessions, she confirmed the value of this interpretation, and went further in the transformation of the relationship with her mother, in the sense of acquiring more autonomy, becoming less reactive to her comments, ceasing to disqualify her husband as before, in other words becoming less and less a copy of mummy, becoming more and more herself.

Interpretation is usually administrated to others, but we are also frequently abusing this tool for ourselves. Here is a very clear warning from Chariji about the risks of these hetero- and auto-interpretations:

"Abhyasis should not try to interpret their experiences because then they are imposing their own opinion on an experience, which may not be correct. What really happens is, I think, our ôwn inner ideas surface to the mind and assume these symbolic representations. So the interpretation should always be left to the Master and we, as abhyasis, should only report our experience. This is a very important thing because I know most of the misery that abhyasis experience after meditation is because of their wrong interpretation which they give themselves. So please don't attempt it at all. It's a very interesting experiment, but you should not do it.

"I remember one occasion when a preceptor gave me a sitting and he was a very advanced preceptor. And his finding was that I was hard as stone. Master was quite angry when this was reported to him. He said, 'This is why I don't want even preceptors to interpret their own findings.' Because sometimes they also impose an artificial interpretation. And this comes out of a need to always interpret everything that we see or hear or perceive. What is this? Why is this? How is this? So this is not important to know all the time, and I know some instances when it took my Master several days to come to a correct understanding of an experience I have reported to him. So the abhyasi is least qualified in this direction. And if you want to avoid a miserable time subsequent to meditation, please

avoid this totally. And to attempt to interpret dreams is even worse. Very often we don't even remember the dreams correctly. So in all these matters, please write it down and send it to the president... and let him break his head.

"I would add one more warning: don't refer these matters to psychologists. Very few of them are even marginally qualified to handle spiritual experiences or dreams with a spiritual content. I feel compelled to give this warning because more and more abhyasis ask me, 'Should I consult a psychiatrist?' It is no disrespect to that profession. But their curriculum does not include spiritual experiences. So that is what I have to say, because so many anguished readings, so many anguished interpretations — it reveals a perverse tendency in the human mind, a tendency to often convert an experience into its opposite. And that is a very dangerous tendency. Because, very often, we would rather have the wrong interpretation rather than wait for the right interpretation."[88]

Interpretations are frequently used between people, especially among Westerners, maybe partly under the influence of the widespread psychoanalytical ideas through different media. Unhappily, these interpretations are most of the time not made altruistically, nor in a digestible form, nor with any remarkable lucidity. We call them, in psychotherapeutic jargon, 'wild interpretations', or even 'projective interpretations', when they characterize the interpreter more than the receiver, which is frequently the case. This has been said, in other words, a very long time ago by Jesus Christ himself:

"Why, then, do you look at the mote in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will be able to see clearly to take the mote out of your brother's eye." (Matthew 7).

This famous sentence of Jesus reveals, of course, that projection is an egoistic defense mechanism as old as human beings; but it also reveals that there is usually something in the eye of our brother or sister which we can see, and about which we can discuss or make a chronic fixation, exempting

---

[88] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.330-331.

us from taking care of what the problem is in ourselves. In the daily reality of our relationships, we can find all the degrees of grossness distributed between the so-called observer, or judge, and the person observed or judged.

We can recognize a projective tendency in ourselves each time we react emotionally to information, in a conversation, in a letter, or in remembering something. In other words, each time an emotion comes up, like sadness, or anger, or jealousy, or whatever it is, we can be sure that the problem is also in us. Of course the problem can be in the other person, but it is also in ourselves. And since in spirituality we should normally take care of our own problems, we can evaluate how much we have to work. Otherwise, as Chariji said some time ago in Bangalore:[89]

"You don't run to spirituality; you are running away from your problems. So that they don't succeed either in spirituality or in their flight from their materialistic life. I ask myself why people who come to us looking for consolation and relief don't obtain them. It is not that the Master doesn't want to give it to them. But in their mind, they continue to avoid their problems, their family problems and their associated difficulties, and they don't go anywhere, and if you don't go anywhere..."

And later he adds:

"If you have the courage to face yourselves, you will discover that we are all treading on somebody else's patch, all of us without exception. Maybe the sole exception is the Master. Then why not withdraw ourselves, and why call it renunciation?"

So, introspection is useful to a certain point, as Vivekananda said about our intellect. On the one hand, psychoanalysts have gone very far, sometimes much too far[90] with this tool, often reinforcing problems rather than solving them. At the other extreme, some cathartic types of therapy using

---

[89] Speech given in August 1990.

[90] Far doesn't imply deep!

body expression have more or less openly encouraged acting out and experiencing rather than integrating the experience. And many people engaged in spirituality refuse introspection because of the excesses of the other camp. In other words, they take refuge in a comforting generalization rather than accepting an interpretation which might make them tired or afraid, because of the risk of discovering uncomfortable things in themselves. These abhyasis seem to have difficulties in writing their diaries, although they know it is recommended by the Master as a part of the Sahaj Marg method to promote an honest *tête à tête* with themselves, not as a goal in itself, but as a way of avoiding stagnation through diverse justifications. Chariji has often warned us against this resistance to introspection, as in the following passage:

"Once we start justifying our faults, we cannot rise above them."[91]

Sahaj Marg literature frequently offers apparently contradictory statements on this subject:

"Babuji says, 'Know thyself is incorrect: forget yourselves and remember Him,' is our motto, is our adage, is our teaching. It should be written in letters of gold where we can see them. Because that way we overcome that need to look at ourselves, criticize ourselves, evaluate ourselves, and work upon ourselves. As abhyasis we are not asked to judge ourselves. We are only asked to maintain a diary, again, wherever possible, just note what you see as if you are a scholar observing a subject... It is observation and recording."[92]

"This is the tragedy of Sahaj Marg that there is no introspection, there is no self-examination."[93]

Or, in the same direction:

"If you want to develop and reach the goal, know yourself for what you are."[94]

---

[91] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.271.

[92] *Proceedings of the Preceptors' Seminar*, Pune, May 2-4, 1991, p.12.

[93] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.10.

When reading the draft of this book, Chariji wrote the following comment:

"This contradiction is only superficial. We have said it is incorrect to 'know thyself' only when we remember Him! That is — if there is no constant remembrance, then introspection becomes necessary."[95]

"In other words, we replace the small 's' by a capital 'S', in the famous sentence of the Oracle of Delphi, "Know thyself." And there is no more problem with truly useful introspection when instead of 'know yourself', you get to 'know your Self'."[96]

On a more general basis, a moderate use of our psychological tools is necessary for our evolution, for our ability to go up, or to be pulled up, from one stage to the next one.

Role of Prevention

What has to be prevented, and how to describe this prevention done in a spiritual context? Preventive medicine, which started with the first measures taken against infectious diseases, has been used in recent years. By analogy, in the spiritual field, in our sadhana, cleaning can be considered as a very important preventive measure. In psychology, prevention is sometimes achieved through largely overlapping means such as educating, explaining, or treating. For example, by treating parents, or a family, psychotherapists try to prevent trouble for the next generation, protecting children from further compulsive behaviour of their parents or grandparents.

As to the role of prevention as a psychological tool in spirituality, there is an English saying: "To be forewarned is

---

[94] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VI, p.13.

[95] Vrads Sande ashram, Denmark, 11 December 1993.

[96] The transformation of this sentence is also a proof of how important the empty space is, as Chariji has often made us observe, like here between letters, for distinguishing between yourself and your Self.

to be forearmed," meaning that we could save much time and energy by heeding warnings. One of the classical warnings that we find in all spiritual teachings concerns the attractive things that impede our progress. In Sahaj Marg literature we find many warnings of this type. It is the same with advice. We must be very cautious with this practice of giving advice, as Babuji himself explained, because we know how rarely it is followed, and how, as a consequence, the recipient has the added burden of guilt. Babuji gave the advice of not giving advice, although we know that it is not the only advice he gave!

Most of the time we are not able to give the right advice, because there is too much of ourselves in it. More often, we give advice which is not requested. When advice is requested, but used later on to combat another piece of advice from another person, the only effect is that stagnation, ambivalence, perplexity or confusion is established.[97] Moreover, advice is prone to trigger resistance in the person advised. However, the way to diminish the resistance is to avoid giving advice to a particular person, but to give it on a more generalized basis, as the spiritual guides are doing in their speeches. This would perhaps explain Babuji's apparent contradiction about advice giving.

What has to be prevented is fear and confusion, which leads to stagnation or aggravation. Perhaps we could even make it simpler if we imply that confusion is secondary to fear. Fear is the basic problem, leading to confusion, provoking the blocking of ourselves, our psychological functions, sometimes even our bodily functions, as psychosomatic research has abundantly demonstrated. Then there

---

[97] In terms of *I Ching*, this would fall under Trigram 4: "Youthful Folly."

can be no learning, no possible change, no action, no love; therefore, no spiritual evolution.

Role of Correction and Treatment

These two activities overlap very much, the former belonging more to the educational field, and the latter rather to the psychotherapeutic one. Correction has been seen as a particular type of therapy or treatment. The wider concept of treatment uses many tools, including correction, in order to look after somebody and, if possible, to heal and cure the person. In other words, correction is considered here as a limited therapeutic intervention of short duration, in order to set the person in the right direction.

At a psychological level, treatment is a very wide concept including all the previous concepts we have reviewed so far. In other words, in treating we are using a wide range of tools or techniques, such as joining, approving, complimenting, congratulating, praising, listening, silencing, ignoring, frustrating, correcting, scolding, punishing, explaining, clarifying, relabeling, reframing, interpreting, advising, prescribing, modeling, negotiating, reassuring, encouraging, joking, protecting, providing affection, empathy, comprehension, insight, etc.

It is suggested here that the above techniques are normally also used by the spiritual guides in order to help the seekers on a spiritual path to become more flexible psychologically; in other words, to soften their egotistic defense mechanisms. But sometimes they must be used to build or

rebuild the psychological structure of the person, depending on the level of the psychopathology encountered.[98]

But do we need to be treated psychologically along our spiritual path? Yes, we occasionally need psychological treatment, or at least psychological therapeutic interventions, which are selective, focused actions of short duration. Such interventions are frequently made by spiritual guides of all traditions. They usually don't need to be done by psychotherapists.

Among a population of Vipassana meditators, almost all kind of psychopathologies have been recorded by Engler [158], who explains their occurrence by the loosening effect of meditation on the psychological *apparatus* or psyche, facilitating de-repression, or intense emotionally charged affects and behaviour. Assagioli has also described different kind of crises and reactions along the 'transmutation process', that are not detailed here [163].

What about abhyasis of Shri Ram Chandra Mission? The next chapter, entitled Psychiatric Emergencies and Spiritual Practice: Their Management and Prevention, deals with certain aspects of the above. By using the methodology described earlier (chapter 2), I can report so far that all kinds of known psycho-pathologies do occur, and may require different types of treatment or therapeutic intervention. This is, however, only the case for Westerners (or almost only).[99]

---

[98] Of course, we are not pretending here that a guru is using these sole psychological tools of treating only, but that he may also use them 'from above'.

[99] As Chariji commented himself when reading the draft of this book, "This very rarely happens with Oriental peoples!"

As an example, in five years of observation, I have had to provide or to contribute to the following types of treatments:

1. Heavy psychotropic drugs such as neuroleptics and the organization of hospitalization to proceed to emergency hospitalization or to organize, for example, from the ashram, a way back home and further psychiatric help.
2. Regular long term psychotherapy, including or not including different members of the family or the network, and usually starting after an exacerbation of already well-known problems had taken place, as if the practice was making the problem so obvious that the abhyasi could no longer avoid working it through.
3. Short term psychotherapy with the same characteristics.
4. Therapeutic interventions on an individual basis, or again on a wider basis, with family and close relationships, with or without the use of psychotropic drugs (from sleeping pills to neuroleptics via tranquilizers).

As we will repeat in the next chapter, all the so-called heavy situations of psychiatric emergencies so far observed were correlated to an obvious and significant lack of discipline in sadhana, namely the neglect of cleaning. Seminars seemed to intensify the symptoms, such as insomnia, delusion, depersonalization, agitation and aggressive behaviour. This should not surprise us, since we know of the property of the transmission of pranahuti stimulating everything.

All the abhyasis requesting important psychotherapeutic help (points 1 and 2) had also strong difficulties practising cleaning and meditation, and practising them properly during the irregular periods they practised. In fact, this impossibility

of practising has become, for me, the main indication for providing psychotherapeutic help to abhyasis.

Such brothers and sisters were also psychologically fragile previous to their introduction to the Mission. In other words, intense transmission seemed to acutely re-actualize previous and serious psychological troubles. These troubles had a tendency to surface most often during the first two years; seemingly the more quickly the trouble took place, the more massive and serious they were.[100]

As far as short term psychotherapy is concerned, they have been the result of a much more mature kind of step, consisting in approaching psychotherapists, some of whom were also preceptors, during quiet periods, in order to deal specifically with a particular problem coming up again and again.[101]

Concerning psychotherapeutic interventions, they seem to be adequate responses to transient troubles such as anxiety, insomnia, emotional arousal towards exaltation or anger, or sadness with or without weeping. These troubles are either interiorized, or projected onto interpersonal conflicts. I consider these symptoms as transient aggravations before or during a cleaning process, when there is also some resistance to letting go of the attachment that is on its way to being cleaned away.

As we will describe further in chapter 4, it is therefore not astonishing to observe these symptoms in more intense or acute forms during, and right after, seminars, because of the

---

[100] Maybe these troubles could be considered as one type of possible manifestations of a delayed 'ambivalence reaction', or revolt against the spiritual action and its transformative action, the instances of which Chariji mentioned usually takes place within the first year of practice.

[101] Sister Luz Sigl of Munich, as a psychotherapist, has experienced this more adult type of request more often than I have.

intensification of the spiritual work. I have myself been given some tranquilizers during such a passage by another abhyasi-psychiatrist, to whom I also gave some of the same on another occasion. Why I am mentioning these facts is to show that being a psychotherapist doesn't constitute a guarantee against the onset of symptoms, and thereby infer that these phenomena of transient psychological or psycho-somatic troubles are very common. Being very common, the physical Master cannot deal directly with all of them. But he does this sometimes, and when I could attend some of his direct interventions, it was a wonderful learning situation for the professional psychotherapist that I am. Almost all of us are frequently involved in such interventions, knowingly or not, in different ways. It is sometimes not more than listening to someone, or being listened to, in a patient and empathetic manner. In that sense, I have no doubts about stating that we all need psychological interventions, at least occasionally.

Sometimes, of course, the requested intervention is at a deeper level, and the counselor may not always feel adequately at what level the help is needed, in which form and in what 'dosage' the response must be given (we are not speaking here of medication), in order to avoid an aggravation of the already present psychological symptoms. For example, we are not going to help a person experiencing deep threats of entrapment or engulfment by saying that it makes us think of a particular passage read in the Sahaj Marg literature, or to joke about it, because the two levels are not going to resonate together. In other words, with such an answer we are not going to awaken echoes in the person, with the result that we'll only be increasing the problem because of the abhyasi's failed attempt to get adequate help (which should normally start with the feeling of being understood). In order to prevent such discouragement, I think that the correct behaviour would be to systematically check if our

interlocutor feels understood, by observing the effects of our intervention and/or by asking him or her directly. If the answer is negative, and remains negative after one or two modified attempts, our modesty should make us propose the help of someone else.

Till now, as previously mentioned, we have considered this wide concept of treating at an observable psychological level, i.e., we have described the behaviour from outside. We are now going to see how these therapeutic actions can be, or should be, used from inside, and how they should be completed by spiritual actions, so that we can really speak of a 'spiritualized psychology'. In other words, we are going to try to understand how to respect all the five principles of such a psychology, and especially the fifth one, insisting on a minimal interference, so that we are really able to associate psychological help with a spiritual approach.

As far as the general attitude and the spiritual qualities of faith, love, will power, and obedience are concerned, let us just add here a clarifying quotation from Chariji about the first two only, i.e., faith and will power:

> "Faith is not a dual faith, that eighty percent is in the Master, twenty percent is in myself. The faith in the Master goes on increasing day by day and as our faith increases, our will power in our work increases, because there is no doubt now, and therefore our results are more and more fantastic, I should say, until you come to a level where there is no difference between your work and the Master's work.[102]

This attitude can be recommended to every one of us, although it is, of course, especially valid and necessary for preceptors. The preceptors are, of course, more often contacted on such occasions, either between sittings, or just before or after sittings, when the spiritual work facilitates the onset of such manifestations labeled psychological or

---

[102] *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.21.

psychosomatic problems and resulting in a request for help. It is not always easy for preceptors to deal with such problems, especially when they are not communicated in an explicit manner, especially when these problems are not acute enough to prevent the abhyasis from masking them with a certain degree of sophistication.

These relationship aspects will be discussed further in the chapter "The Use and Misuse of Preceptors." But we will be better able to deal with this particular problem later on if we first discuss these uses and misuses on a more general basis, i.e., the uses and misuses of the method, of the Mission, and of the Master.

— 4 —

Psychiatric Emergencies and Spiritual Practice: Their Management and Prevention

Almost every time I attend a seminar, I am involved in the management of acute psychological troubles of one or two, sometimes three abhyasis. In this way I have accumulated some practical experience regarding the diagnosis and management of such conditions. I have had several conversations with our revered Master which were very useful to me in correcting my previous misconceptions and behaviour. Madeleine Badach, Don Sabourin, and André Denjean have also shared with me their experiences in treating different kinds of physical and psychiatric problems during and between seminars. These troubles are not so many in our Mission, but since the Mission is growing fast, their frequency may increase if efficient preventive measures are not taken very rapidly.[103]

It must be admitted that these troubles are more common in Western rather than Indian abhyasis. There are probably numerous reasons for this, whether cultural, educational, psychological, etc.

When Chariji was asked, "Would you say that the ratio between Western abhyasis and Indian abhyasis is about one to ten?", he answered:

---

[103] In fact, as Chariji added when reading the draft of this book, "There is **no** statistical relationship between the total number of abhyasis and the incidence of such problems."

"More than that. You see, if you don't mind me saying that, Westerners are always on the brink of psychiatric problems because they are so much concerned by these in-between stages of the mental, of the intellect, which produced this very fragile technological civilization. Whereas the Indians are more down to earth, in a sense, since they are much more concerned with everyday material problems to be solved."

On the other hand, we should realise that the appearance of psychiatric conditions during our spiritual practice are due to tendencies in ourselves which may become overwhelming for a while when our vigilance and the cleaning process do not compensate for the stimulating effect of transmission. This is more often the case when there is a lack of discipline.

Once in Augerans, when psychiatric problems occurred with three abhyasis at the same time, Chariji explained:

"Practise gives you an inner firmness like papers inside a fragile box, whereas one not practising properly has an inside like fragile glasses in such a box."[104]

Now, this is a touchy subject because we all have a tendency to defend ourselves when faced with something we feel is dangerous. Why? Maybe because we are reminded of previous personal psychological suffering, or because we suspect similar problems in ourselves which we haven't faced yet.

One of the frequent results of this defense strategy has led to our arrogantly thinking of ourselves as the best psychologists on earth, and also the best psychotherapists. As far as my experience goes, it seems that this illusion is frequently held by abhyasis of our Mission. This illusion also seems to include supposed diagnostic ability and medical care capacity. Were it not delusional, no therapeutic interventions should be necessary. We certainly need to learn to handle problems in a more adult and realistic way in order to

---

[104] Informal conversation, Augerans, July 1991.

reduce the incidence of such unnecessary intervention which increases the burden on our Master. In order to change this situation, much more co-operation on the part of abhyasis and, especially, preceptor-abhyasis will be necessary.

Let's start with the spiritual tools available to us when we are in a position to treat. Besides transmission, these tools are mainly remembrance, prayer, and positive suggestions. The general attitude is derived from the spiritual qualities described by Chariji (at Sariska's Preceptors Seminar in 1990), i.e., faith in the Master, love for the Master, obedience to the Master, and will power. [105]

This can be easily written, but when we really start to try to make it part of ourselves, and practise it as constantly as possible, it is another story. For instance, one of the difficulties for me in the cases where 'my' help is requested is that I often do not possess the capacity to judge adequately if the person can be helped — at least in the way he or she asks for it. I don't have a sufficiently broad and deep view to judge the whole situation rapidly and effectively. Moreover, and for a long time in my career as a psychotherapist, I have observed that some patients could not be cured despite my strong and persistent efforts. Some were completely stagnating, some were aggravated, even to the point of committing suicide under therapy. But it took me a very long time to understand and accept the following statement of Chari's made in Bonascre in 1987 about spiritual action and its laws as a response to our numerous requests for help:

"By bringing about inner change, He brings about external change. So the one who can really help is a spiritual Master."[106]

---

[105] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III , p.28-38.

[106] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.17.

Later Chariji added:

"I do not interfere with Nature, except when necessary."

So I asked him, "When is it necessary that you should interfere with Nature?" And he said:

"'Only when something in your destiny will affect your spiritual future.' Now this is the explanation for people coming to Babuji and remaining what they are, though in the spiritual life they are progressing. He does not interfere with what need not be changed in us. Therefore, when we come as poor persons and try to become rich under Sahaj Marg system, it does not work, unless in your horoscope it is there that you are to become rich also. Similarly, you can become very high spiritually, but you may become suddenly a beggar in spite of Sahaj Marg. And then again we go to Babuji and say 'Babuji, I came to you but I have lost what little I had.' He is very compassionate. He says, 'I will pray for you.' There also, he does not interfere, unless that poverty is going to make me run away from spirituality. In which case, he may do something little to revive my faith. Not otherwise. So this is the explanation of why abhyasis have so many problems."[107]

So if even Masters have this humility, which is pure wisdom, to respect nature, how can I believe that I can help others by myself? Rather, I should pray in my heart to my Master for the people requesting help from me, which means bringing that person to Master's attention in the subtlest way I am able. It is a delicate operation, for which we have to use our sensitivity, which may only come from being able to feel full faith in the Master and obedience to Him. The reward is an enormous sense of relief when one's conscience becomes much more quiet, releasing us from the stressful waiting for positive and quick results.

Of course, this attitude of prayer, or of surrender to Him, doesn't mean that we have nothing to do by ourselves, that nothing can be done actively through ourselves, as if changes or help could only occur in the physical presence of our

---

[107] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.28.

spiritual Master. On the contrary, it means that we should always be open to the Master, in order to act according to His indications, something which is only possible when we are in remembrance. Otherwise, whatever we are, professionally or non-professionally, we can't really help, as Chariji explained further in the same speech at Bonascre:

"Even if you are trying to change yourself by education, by culture, by going to therapy, nothing will work. Because of this important fact that you cannot change your life yourself. Now what happens, we come to a Master.[108]

"Then along comes spirituality. And there comes the first possibility of changing people, and thus helping them, especially under Sahaj Marg because, at one stroke you remove or clean his samskaras, giving a new direction to his life; and by transmission we give them something positive."[109]

The very writing of this particular chapter, in a way which is more or less connected to the Master, has helped me to strengthen the effort to integrate in my daily life the five principles of a spiritualized psychology. I can say that, for

---

[108] As we know, this very finding of a Master of high calibre is considered the main thing towards attaining our goal. But as usual, the second wing, or the other side of the coin, says that we have to do something actively ourselves. The following extract of the fourth maxim's commentary by Babuji is, for example, very illustrative of these two complementary elements: "Now since this diversion of thought is beyond the capacity of a common man, he should attach himself to some great personality who is himself firmly established in the highest plane beyond all possibilities of fall. The downward tendency of thought indicates that one has descended to a lower plane, assuming a grosser form. In such a case it is quite essential for him to get himself attached to one of his fellow beings with faith and devotion, so that his downward tendency may be mended by his influence. This will relieve him of all distracting thoughts. He must also cultivate habits which will be conducive to his efforts for shattering the network. For instance, the ears should attend only to noble talks; the eyes should see only that which is pious and good; the heart should be inclined only towards that which is virtuous. There may be many such other things which will automatically come to his knowledge if he is after it. Besides this, he must also put in his own sincere efforts to shatter the net."

[109] *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.17.

me, now there's little difference between my work as a psychotherapist with 'non-official abhyasis', and as an abhyasi-preceptor with 'official abhyasis'.

In fact, the only difference is that in the former case, there is no formal sitting requested or given, but this does not prevent transmission from automatically starting rather often during psychotherapeutic sessions. However, it took me a long time to start feeling myself to be a witness of the Master. This meant deferring to the power and the infinite experience of the Master, rather than to the limited experience of a professional. This is a point Chariji was patient enough to explain to me some years ago in Châtel-Saint-Denis, during a conversation following an unpublished talk given there by brother Otto Reicheneder, who touched upon this essential point. For further details, we can read Chari's speech entitled 'Work in Remembrance'[110] from which the following passage is taken:

> "'When you work, don't think you are working. Work in the consciousness of the Master, in His remembrance.' What is the benefit? When we think of Him and we are totally forgetting ourselves in His remembrance, His power begins to work through us! 'Then the miracle happens that His power works through you.'"

Perhaps each of us should realise that we have chosen a spiritual path. Therefore, we must not let ourselves be impressed or paralyzed by these lower, namely psychological, conditions which we may have to go through in order to approach our Goal. In other words, avoidance behaviour reinforces the fear and gives us less opportunity to strengthen ourselves, which is a necessary process for attaining our chosen primary Goal.

---

[110] *Heart to Heart,* vol. II, p.39-50.

Having been able to observe my personal imperfections and repetitive errors has pushed me to write this chapter. But since my immaturity, my selfishness, and my foolishness seem to be shared by many abhyasis, including preceptor-abhyasis, I am sharing information and making suggestions for better prevention and management of these psychiatric conditions, so that more of these very painful, disturbing, troublesome and costly situations could be avoided in the future. In order to attain this perhaps minor goal, more responsibility and solidarity are urgently required.

Solidarity and responsibility mean that if I consider myself as the brother or sister of an abhyasi in difficulty I would be willing to give up some hours of my time. This, even after having encountered the first difficulties I am surely going to meet when I dare to interact in such a situation. And since it is not a comfortable life that we seem to have chosen, we may grasp this as an opportunity to learn to be less emotional in stressful situations.

In order to help us when facing such stressful situations, I would prefer that we remember that, in accepting the theory of samskaras and reincarnation, we need also to accept the possibility that in the thousands or millions of our preceding lives, we have been all kinds of persons, not only famous queens or *rishis*, but also simple people with all kinds of problems and behaviour [145,197]. We have certainly been depressed, manic, psychotic, mentally retarded, sociopathic, etc. As a consequence of the stimulating effect of pranahuti on these ancient envelopes we have to traverse as the result of *bhog*, there is nothing so unexpected about going through psychiatric or parapsychological conditions. But if we apply the Sahaj Marg system appropriately (that is, with discipline and dedication), we can go through all these significant

troubles in a minimum of time and with a minimum of suffering, i.e., without requiring psychiatric treatment.[111] This

---

[111] In order to illustrate this point, let us quote here a passage from a letter sent to me by brother Don Sabourin: "It seems to me that we can react to any given experience in three pathological ways or in one positive way. We can become attached to our experience and attempt to hold it in memory for further enjoyment as time goes by. The samskara formed goes into our pleasant memories cupboard within our subconscious. Or we can run away from an unpleasant experience by attempting to forget it and concentrate on happy thoughts. These get stored in the avoided memories cupboard within. Or the third way that we can handle an experience is to forcefully suppress the memory by burying it in our subconscious in what I call Pandora's Box. These are the pathological ways of dealing with experience.

The fourth and correct way to deal with an experience is to suggest **that it is Master having the experience**. By doing so, there is no attachment, revulsion or avoidance involved, thus no samskara is formed. This method is prescribed by our beloved Babuji in *Reality at Dawn* and is further discussed in his other works. Ultimately, we all have to adopt this practice if he is to take us up to **that** stage. Those whom He has lifted high, who have not fully adopted this practice have left the Mission and are sliding downwards on the slippery surface of their own ego.

We need to utilize the idea that, "This is Master's experience. He is feeling these feelings and thinking these thoughts. It is all His. He is sharing the experience with me, but it all belongs to Him." When we have this idea, all our experience takes on a different colour (grey). The emotion is gone, the pride or guilt is gone, the anger or fear is gone, and the experience does not leave any impression. Therefore no samskara is formed. Remember how Babuji described going to the toilet, doing your business there, and forgetting about it. When we learn this lesson and practise it on a regular basis - there can be no further crisis for that individual.

So, what we need to emphasize to all abhyasis is the regular practice of remembrance that it is Master, not me, who is the doer and the experiencer. Prior to our beginning this practice, we have all tucked away our experiences into their respective cupboard or box. Now He has to empty them for us.

The pleasant memories cupboard gives us fairly pleasant, blissful or egoistic experiences which do not attract a lot of attention at gatherings unless they are very dramatic. But they can prove to be a major obstacle in our progress, because they tend to aggrandize the ego by letting one think that they are special in a spiritual way and equal to the Master, or not needing the Master's assistance.

The **runaway memories** will chase us and catch up to us by the effect of cleaning. The re-appearance of these thoughts or feelings will make one experience the anxiety of being overtaken by a bogeyman and one will often

is not the case when the methods used by professionals are not natural, when they are more or less violent, more or less enforced, with inadequate preparation and inadequate monitoring between intense sessions. Without an efficient cleaning process as part of the method, and above all when there is no Master of calibre behind what is being done, then problems are likely to arise. It is even more likely to be damaging when more than one method is applied simultaneously.

Says Chari:

"The true reformer is a silent worker who preaches against nothing, who reviles nothing, and who condemns no one but, having worked upon himself silently and in secret, sets out to do the same with and for others, in the same secret and silent manner."[112]

During the discussion following the MD-56 session in Hyderabad, Chariji confirmed the above:

---

react with panic and a feeling of wanting to run away from Master and the seminar.

The **Pandora's box of suppressed memories** are the most dangerous, because we have applied our will to suppress them. Because of the force used to bury them, when they come out they come with an explosive force that tends to make one lose all sense of being in control. As you are no doubt aware, it is the fear of losing control that places one into a psychiatric condition requiring sedation and hospitalization. When the over-controlling person thinks that they have lost control, they completely fall apart.

Now, all the above mentioned cupboards (and box) must be emptied if we are to get Him. When a samskara is removed, we re-experience the emotions of when it was first formed and it becomes another opportunity to feel it is Master experiencing it and let it go like an uninvited guest or to try to handle it personally and thus push it back in as another samskara waiting to be removed or experienced as *bhog*. Thus the need for emphasis on suggesting that whatever we are doing, thinking or feeling, it is really Master who is doing, thinking or feeling it.

[112] *Souvenir, Basant Utsav,* 1992. "Master's Voice", p.20.

"Before closing, I would like to recommend to Ferdinand's attention one point of interaction between what you call spirituality and psychology [laughter]. One, I have already referred to: faith. The second is suggestion. And the subtler the suggestion, the more potent an act it is, enacting on the abhyasi. Babuji Maharaj said, 'The suggestion must be so subtle that it is almost not there.' The same with prayer. The prayer must be so subtle that it is almost not a prayer. Now, when we use coarser or grosser methods of applying therapies, their effectiveness is in inverse proportion. The grosser the method, the less its effectiveness. If it is totally gross, it will be almost a failure. Therefore, I have always suspected chemotherapies for mental illness and things like that, because they are sort of like using a howitzer to kill a fly. So when we talk of psychology, we should talk of the subtlest levels of psychological approach, of psychological therapies, and the subtlest suggestions of the Master. When it is reciprocated by the almost total faith in the abhyasi, the results are absolutely miraculous."

Chariji does not support the distinction made by some authors between psychiatric disorders and so-called 'spiritual emergencies', because by definition spirituality is beyond psychological, psychiatric, and even parapsychological phenomena.[113] Neither does he think that the intensity of the symptoms indicates the speed of spiritual transformation, but rather the intensity of the egoistic resistance. This confusion has been facilitated by the fact that these crises may arise during or after the point when a particular spiritual progression has already taken place. During these crises, it seems

---

[113] Parapsychological (psychic) phenomena may be considered as an intermediate realm between the psychological and the spiritual. It has been considered as a band or a filter by Ken Wilber [154], which he called 'transpersonal bands'. When these intermediate bands are crossed, where "Mountains are no longer mountains," as the Buddhists say, unusual experiences may take place, which should normally not put the seeker in a crisis. These experiences have been correctly gathered by Ch. and S. Grof, but to our sense improperly titled 'spiritual emergencies', in the fourth chapter of their book called *The Stormy Search for the Self* [131]. The most frequently described experiences of these intermediate, transpersonal bands are peak experiences, near-death experiences, extrasensory perceptions, past-life memories, shamanic states, channeling, possession states, encounters with UFOs, and partial awakening of *kundalini*.

that a buried psychological material emerges to mix with spiritual material from the subtler part of the unconscious. As a result, the seeker may feel mixed up for some time. As Chariji puts it:

"Now in Sahaj Marg work, preceptors know this problem, you see, that very often when the abhyasis progress is coming in a very noticeable way, it comes in some form of, I don't know how to say, outburst, emotional, or even seemingly mental problems... There is a possibility that the abhyasi may become fixed at that particular manifestation of work. Now how to explain this to the abhyasis or their husbands and wives? So it's very difficult. And then it is a heartbreaking situation."[114]

"There is no such thing as spiritual emergency. The emergency is always in the material life. We cannot say an emergency is an emergence; it's playing with words. Emergency means: that which comes suddenly, like an explosion.

It becomes a system: they have created a crisis so that you can prove that there are crises. Every change is a personal crisis because a change interferes with our sense of security. It's a reflection of our material life. It is what produces the crisis. So a crisis shows a lack of inner strength."[115]

So there are no spiritual emergencies: what is responsible for the symptoms, emotional in nature, is grossness going out, and the resistance to the cleaning process through the *bhog*. This grossness may, of course, be mixed with spiritual or so-called transpersonal experiences. This mixed phenomenon looks like a kind of fight between the search for a personal power and the letting go process towards surrendering to the Self. The problem arises when we think that since we are following a spiritual practice, we should experience high order phenomenon only — i.e., spiritual in nature and not psycho-pathological.

I found myself in such a mixed condition during summer 1989, when I was practising intensively during seminars in

---

[114] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.298-299.

[115] Informal conversation, Madras (Glenmore), December 1992.

the presence of Chari, mainly in Augerans and Atlanta (West Point). This experience helped me to discriminate between the spiritual phenomenon I was witnessing (such as visions, partial time/space collapse, intense inside fire feeling, etc.), and the psychosomatic phenomenon due to my own tendencies, such as haste, irritability, erotic and megalomaniac fantasies. In this context, I remember having written to Chari, in an attempt to summarize all my feelings and emotions: "I accept to become mad under your protection!" Later on, this experience gave me a powerful push in this spiritual process that we call, appropriately, a path.

More confusion has been created because some therapists, having themselves gone through such psychiatric conditions on their spiritual path, have consequently wanted to help their brothers and sisters in an acceptable way, so that they call this grossness by different names.

In fact, there is no shame of such symptoms, knowing that even great sages and saints have gone through transient psychiatric states, like Ma Anandamayi, Krishnamurti, Meher Baba or Rama Krishna.[116] However, their mystical intoxication due to their inner spiritual link was so intense that they could cross this *bhog* instead of letting themselves "become fixed at that particular manifestation" (as Chariji puts it). In other words, instead of becoming mad, they remained '*masth*' for some time, i.e., transiently intoxicated in what we have called a 'mixed condition'.

I. Prevention and Management of Early Stages of These Symptoms

A. Early stages of symptoms.

---

[116] *Le Maître et le Thérapeute*, Jacques Vigne, Albin Michel, 1991, p.149-150, and *Eléments de Psychologie Spirituelle*, same author, same editor, 1992.

B. Acute psychiatric symptoms and their management.

C. Follow up.

The following may help promote a realistic spiritual attitude when we have to face acute psychological problems as abhyasis:

1. Before Introduction

Our Masters' suggestions and warnings about the prevention of unnecessary sufferings and misunderstandings highlight the need for systematic evaluation on the part of the preceptor who meets the abhyasis before introduction. Two questions should be taken into consideration at the early phase:

a) Should this brother or sister be introduced 'as usual' or connected to the Master in another way (for example, by means of the Sahaj Marg prayer)?

Chariji warned in the New Year's Message of December 1991:

> "Our preceptors must be very wary when admitting new abhyasis, to see that people who cannot be helped are not there. I am specifically referring to people with mental problems, and who have undergone mental treatment in hospitals and psychiatry clinics. There are more and more of such cases, and it must be strictly understood by preceptors and by all that such people are only to be helped directly by my Master."

b) How many introductory sittings are necessary for this particular brother/ sister?

Although we know that Babuji gave as many as twenty-two sittings to an abhyasi before introduction, how often have we routinely introduced abhyasis with three sittings only, and discovered later on that we should not have been so quick? It seems that most preceptors have considered the twenty-two sittings of Babuji as an isolated curiosity, an odd

record worth being mentioned in the *Guinness Book of Records*, and nothing more. But of course, if Chariji has mentioned this historical fact to us, it was for a much more serious and practical reason, regarding the adequate dosage of cleaning necessary before regular individual sittings and pranahuti could be beneficial to the candidate abhyasi. In other words, between the three usual sittings and the still present world record of twenty-two sittings,[117] there are nineteen possibilities.

Maybe we preceptors are too enthusiastic, too naive, too mechanical, or seemingly unconscious in our work? Or are we just too lazy? Or is it due to our lack of the ability to read the condition of the abhyasi? It is not for us to judge, but we should remember that Chariji himself has not always introduced abhyasis immediately to the full practice, i.e., to each aspect of our sadhana, including prayer, cleaning, meditation, practice of constant remembrance, individual sittings, and satsangh.[118] He has, for example, made some abhyasis wait before full introduction, for instance by prescribing prayer only for a time, or a prayer plus individual cleaning plus frequent individual sittings for cleaning purpose only. So it is evident that preceptors should emulate Him in this respect, too, and carefully evaluate each situation before announcing that there will be three sittings followed by the automatic attendance of *satsangh* and seminars and the Basant attendance in India.

---

[117] The reason why this world record has not been yet beaten is obvious: it is not because of our respect or devotion or worship for Babuji, but in order to bring some relief (if necessary) to a well-known feeling amongst preceptors of being snowed under with work. Let us remind sister and brother preceptors that as far as the introduction sittings are concerned, only the first three should be given in a maximum of three days span, whereas the following ones may be more spaced out.

[118] We mention this progression purposefully.

We also suggest that abhyasis who know candidate abhyasis should tell them that the preceptor is going to decide what will be done, rather than, "There will be three sittings, as usual." For questionable cases, why not delay the decision by referring to a senior preceptor or to Chari, explaining the situation and sending Him a picture of the person?

In our experience, problems are more prone to happen if some of the following features are present:

- The brother or the sister has suffered serious psychiatric problems treated in hospitals with psychotropic drugs in his or her past.
- The person has started and abruptly interrupted psychotherapy.
- The person is currently under psychiatric treatment, including psychotropic drugs such as neuroleptics or antidepressive drugs.
- The person has recently started psychotherapy.
- The person is in haste to be introduced, suffers no delay, has a tendency to impose dates, hours, and place for the sittings, and refuses to read anything about Sahaj Marg literature prior to introduction.
- The brother or sister displays emotional tendencies during pre-introductory discussion, with a proneness to ask for special attention from the preceptor, to whom personal problems are rapidly and too openly confessed.

2. After Introduction

Once these abhyasis are fully introduced, their preceptor should keep a special eye on them, especially before seminars. It seems obvious that most abhyasis showing psychiatric symptoms reveal them only after some time of

practice or malpractice. Usually we can distinguish two kinds of fragility:

a) Some lack 'psychological structure'. They are very open in a sense, confess everything without restraint, are generally dependent, easily influenced. Sometimes they are more passive or even inhibited. In case of decompensation, this pattern may lead to confused states with more or less anxiety.

b) Some are rigid, proud, authoritarian, assertive, with an apparent superiority complex, want always to be right and to have the last word. This may lead to delusions of self-aggrandizement, or of persecution.

If introduction has already been made and psychiatric symptoms appear, preceptors should be able to request adaptive changes in the practice consisting, for instance, in stopping satsangh attendance or giving advice to avoid seminars or to postpone a trip to India, etc., according to what is observed, felt, or read during sittings and other interactions. This implies both much respect for the abhyasi and the ability to set limits, at the cost of disapproval or even insult. In fact, this capacity of saying no, of setting limits, of being firm in our relationships is usually the reflection of our capacity to say no to ourselves, to be vigilant with ourselves, to discriminate adequately, and obey our Master without hesitation, even if not yet able to love Him.

These qualities are very necessary in such situations, because putting pressure on abhyasis to modify their practice and to take adequate measures to prevent further aggravation of their troubles is always delicate and usually unwelcome. Of course, there is always a kind way of saying it so that our brothers and sisters are not hurt by such a recommendation or request. Preceptors should be able to face and accept being considered fools or scapegoats by momentarily frustrated

abhyasis, because this passing discomfort cannot be compared with the suffering and dangers incurred by abhyasis caught up in 'bad trips'. Unfortunately, preceptors sometimes remain passive in order to avoid disturbances, complications, time-consuming discussions, risks of being disrespected, or of losing 'friends'.

It is not rare that in their states of anxiety and insecurity, abhyasis will look defensively for 'magical help', namely for getting, in one way or another, some confirmation of their fantasies or delusions. In order to get this kind of help, they often consult abhyasis known for having some extra-sensory faculties.

When consulted, these 'extra-sensory-prone' abhyasis should, of course, refrain from any hurtful revelations, as the usual professional ethics require, instead of confirming that one's husband is "cheating you with another woman," or whatever it may be. Chari, who can unquestionably see the real things in us, said:

> "If I would tell all the truth to abhyasis, there would be only three left in the Mission."[119]

Let us also remember that even if we qualify what we say, our qualifying "it could be", or "probably" are usually erased; the person will tend to take the rest for granted, over-dramatizing our statement. I permit myself to say all this because I have observed that there seems to be too much of such 'fortune-teller' type of information being passed around in Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

---

[119] Manapakkam, informal conversation, May 1992.

3. Preparing for Seminars

When a seminar is announced, we suggest that its attendance by any abhyasis in potential crisis should be discussed with their preceptor until they are stable, so that they can attend such a great spiritual event with more security, i.e., without presenting notable psychological, psychosomatic, or somatic difficulties.

Rather than lazily assuming that the Master will more easily help and solve all the current difficulties of the unstable abhyasi, we suggest that preceptors should be able to apply some pressure for the non-attendance of seminars in certain cases. Such a policy seems to have been more systematically applied in the past, according to 'old abhyasis'.

There are signs we consider as contra-indications for attending seminars:

- The abhyasi is not practising regularly and efficiently.
- The abhyasi is going through a difficult personal situation, during which his or her tendencies are already increased. In this regard, to think they have a special relationship with the Master is a bad sign.[120]
- The abhyasi is suffering from sleep problems or fluctuating anxiety.
- The abhyasi manifests irritability, impatience, loss of concentration, or even agitation (hypo-mania).[121]

---

[120] We all have a unique relationship with the Master, but no one has a special relationship with Him; no one is loved personally.

[121] Now we should not think that we are going to have a tragic psychotic breakdown because we couldn't sleep for one night or because we have felt some irritability in a particular interaction with a brother or sister. And if we accept interacting with a momentarily disturbed brother or sister, neither

- The abhyasi is ambivalent about going to the seminar, or reluctant to go, but is pushed to go by others close to them.
- The abhyasi is presently undergoing psychiatric treatment and taking psychotropic drugs.
- The abhyasi is under physical treatment and has not discussed the problem of going to an ashram (especially if in India) with the doctor, and so hasn't obtained the 'green light' from a medical point of view. Half of the medical situations are significantly mixed with psychological problems, especially amongst Western abhyasis, when they consult doctors in the ashram during seminars.

How can we know all these difficulties concerning abhyasis in such situations? Such problems are usually known by at least one other abhyasi, usually by several abhyasis. They know that something is out of order but they don't properly report the information to the preceptor. Rather a kind of rumour is created around the abhyasi, whose problem is further aggravated by feeling isolated. Sometimes the information is reported correctly, but does not include the abhyasi and preceptor who is in a position to do something. Sometimes, even when the right information is conveyed to the right person, it is not taken into account or does not lead to appropriate action.

---

should we think that we are going to be contaminated. Anyhow, such thoughts will not arise if we are in remembrance of Him, instead of in the remembrance of the troubles of that particular abhyasi. So, if possible, there should be no dramatization, but no minimization either, like "Well, it's only the cleaning process." Let me repeat here that, as far as I understand these psychiatric problems, they appear to me rather as a **resistance to the cleaning process** during a particular *bhog*, as if the abhyasi is not willing to let go of some tendencies totally, hence the increasing of the intensity of the troubles up to a point where true symptoms are created.

Again, I am not pretending that this is an exhaustive list of contra-indications for attending seminars. The aim is to stimulate thought over this important problem and to encourage vigilance so that we may each become better able to adapt to each unique situation. When in doubt the preceptor should ask for advice from a more experienced preceptor or, if necessary, from Chariji himself.

4. Recommendations in an Ad Hoc Booklet

As an additional preventive measure, it is suggested that some of these observations and recommendations could be included in a small booklet, the topic of which should be our preparation for seminars.[122]

5. Discussions Amongst Preceptors

We also suggest that the topic of who will be attending an upcoming seminar could be regularly tackled during preceptors' meetings as well as the possible related problems that may arise when there are contra-indications for such a participation (like who is going to discuss what with whom, and how, etc.).

II. Acute Psychiatric Symptoms and Their Management

Usually, problems will arise only if we come to seminars without the appropriate preparation. In other words, if practise is not done properly before the seminar, and if we do not do our practise properly during the seminar and, of course, also after the seminar.

---

[122] André Denjean has already started to write something on that topic which could be a basis for discussion.

From what I have been able to observe during the last five years in Shri Ram Chandra Mission, the really disturbing psychiatric conditions can be reduced to only three types.

A. The first of these three conditions is present when anxiety and confusion are overwhelming. In such a condition, the disturbed abhyasi is going to look for frequent reassurance from others who respond in a more or less appropriate way. For example, because they don't know the personal history of the disturbed abhyasi; because they can't figure out what the abhyasi is really facing; because they themselves become rapidly emotional when involved in repeated interaction with the problematic abhyasi, so that mutual projections take place, resulting in a tendency for both to become increasingly distraught with time.

What predominates in the condition of such a brother or a sister is anxiety:

- The crisis may consist only of a single episode of acute anxiety, leading sometimes to a panic state, or a blackout. These symptoms usually occur in psychologically rather sound abhyasis, who momentarily refuse to let go of some personal attachments. The crisis is usually spectacular and of short duration, generally of a few hours, often happening during a satsangh. As a consequence, several abhyasis usually rush towards the momentarily disturbed brother or sister with too much emotion and sympathy, staying for hours in the meditation hall, if nobody intervenes to favour more discrete assistance. Normally a discussion with a preceptor should be sufficient in order to understand what kind of difficulty is being experienced by the abhyasi to prevent the recurrence of such an episode.

- Sometimes the anxiety may lead to a state of confusion with important distortions of reality. But at the same time the person is aware of his or her abnormal condition, hence accepts and usually actively requests special help. We can compare this condition with that of a frightened child. The abhyasi is often confusing his dreams and fantasies with the present reality and with fragments of spiritual experiences. As a result, guilt feelings, exaltation, sadness, or anger may be experienced in a fluctuating way. Somatization(s)[123] can also be present, sometimes predominantly.
- If this condition aggravates, it can lead to a kind of agitated depression or to a delusional outburst, where only a 'primary process'[124] is working, as when we are dreaming. If not handled properly, the person becomes completely exhausted in a few days, and enters a deep depression.[125]
- In terms of envelopes (*koshas*), these persons seem to have a displacement or dislocation of their etheric body.
- There is a depletion of energy, leading to exhaustion if we let the vicious circle continue.

---

[123] Physical symptoms due to more or less transient dysfunctions, related to unsolved psychological conflicts.

[124] For Freudian psychoanalysts, the **primary process** characterizes our unconscious psychological functioning. It appears, for example, in our dreams or in our defense mechanisms, and its purpose is directly linked to the so-called pleasure principle, namely to get the most immediate possible satisfaction of our desires.

In opposition to it, the **secondary process** is considered as a conscious function of our ego, moderating the former, in alignment to the so-called principle of reality.

[125] I have happily not yet observed such a condition during Shri Ram Chandra Mission seminars.

The underlying psychological problem in such situations usually seems to be the effect of the spiritual process in the refinement of our ego, namely softening our defense mechanisms, resulting in a partial loss of our previous frame of reference. There is, in these cases, an inner conflict related to something the abhyasi doesn't want to let go of, in other words a strong attachment to some situation or relationship which is threatened by the spiritual process. The situation does not always have to be in the present, such as the mourning process for a long dead parent. The effect of our spiritual practise can also reactivate an ancient psychological trauma with the same consequences. In other words, the *bhog* is experienced with an egoistic resistance to it.

Because the abhyasi accepts help, this condition should be handled rapidly, either in the ashram itself, or perhaps better in its proximity. For minor cases, the problem may be solved if the abhyasi receives a sitting at the outset of the trouble. As Chariji puts it: "In general, deep sleep is enough, so all that is necessary is something to induce sleep."

In my experience, three non-emotional abhyasis are sufficient to provide the necessary framing and reassurance in an effective way. When the pathological state is of long duration, the treatment usually includes the use of tranquilizers (allopathic drugs such as Valium), or neuroleptics if the person is agitated. If the intervention is made early enough, or after the acute state has been reduced with the help of allopathic drugs, softer medical treatments like acupuncture, acupressure, Bach drops, etc., may be sufficient.

The abhyasis included in the therapeutic team should be willing to handle it for several hours before somebody takes over from them. They should be able to listen patiently, to reassure gently and repeatedly.

It is important for an abhyasi to hear, from a supportive and realistic mature person, that this condition will fade away, because they are more or less convinced that their panic and confusion will never end. So we should behave as 'ambassadors of reality', and help the disturbed person to systematically disregard sensations, images, or thoughts stemming from the dream state.[126]

The participants in such a 'crisis team' should have no fear in themselves. They should also be very vigilant and disciplined, able to share relevant information with each other effectively. Maybe even more important, they should be conscious that they are not the real doers, thinking as much as possible of Him, praying, suggesting positively, both aloud and silently:

"Fear in the abhyasi is a contributing factor. This is because of lack of faith and love. 'Perfect love casteth out fear.'"[127]

Specific cleaning by a preceptor is, of course, useful, but we must realise that for an abhyasi in such a condition, meditation, cleaning, or even prayer, becomes more and more impossible and that sometimes they can't even remain in a stable posture because of their fearful agitation.

Experience teaches us that we are very far from the ideal when we have to improvise such 'crisis teams'. For example, we could notice that:

---

[126] In an already mentioned letter from brother Don Sabourin, let us add this relevant passage: "If we help the abhyasi through the current crisis by a quiet, loving, supportive environment and reassurance, we are limiting their ability to understand and deal with further crisis. Therefore, we need to emphasize the technique of co-operating with the cleaning process by practising the suggestion that, 'It is really Master having this experience,' on a regular basis. In that way, His work will be easier, our progress will be faster, and there will be a minimization of suffering for all concerned."

[127] Comment of Chariji on this book, January 1994.

- We have to deal more with ambivalence than with willingness when a call for help is made.
- Our efficiency in communicating properly to each other is still rather poor, namely much less effective than in medical teams.
- The abhyasis are often rapidly abandoned as soon as they show signs of improvement, which usually are only transitory, since these conditions are fluctuating.

B. The second of these acute psychiatric conditions is due to the overwhelming tendencies of self-aggrandizement and/or persecution, up to a point of delusion.

The megalomaniac themes may be of different kinds, but frequently include the Master, directly or indirectly. The delusional system may be more or less structured, sometimes rigid, sometimes even impenetrable, to the point of being unresponsive to reality testing. The disturbed persons are usually exalted, excitable if not agitated, unable to sleep properly, and the main problem with their conditions is that they think they know better than anybody else, sometimes even Master himself. As a result, they 'logically' refuse the help of other abhyasis, whom they consider inferior to themselves. As a consequence, it is difficult to get their co-operation, and becomes even more difficult to obtain, because as time passes their delusion grows. It can even lead to a state of mania or to an affective schizophrenic episode.[128]

---

[128] A comment of Chariji is of interest here, which shows how a Master, without being a specialist in specific disciplines like psychiatry, is always touching the essence of the subject: "These troubles always make me think of Kali, you know, that black negative face of the Mother." (Madras, January 1993) In fact, in psychiatry we know that such states always have to do with early troubles in the relationship with the mother during childhood. Either with the 'bad' mother, the one who doesn't respond adequately or positively, and

A rather sophisticated strategy is usually necessary with these very active, authoritarian, imaginative conditions. The strategy may consist, for example, of letting the disturbed abhyasi be right and victorious on small issues, whereas the important protective issues are preserved, namely those permitting their quick return home and the prevention of police intervention or psychiatric hospitalization, with their usually negative consequences.

In serious situations, the use of allopathic medicines is almost inevitable in order to prevent the vicious circle continuing, namely neuroleptics combined with sleeping pills. This is the only way to help decrease the high intensity of energy which is directed to the delusional goal.

As far as possible, one of the members of the team should know the disturbed abhyasi very well, in order to offer a maximum amount of reassurance and an adequate reality check, and also to accompany him or her back home as soon as possible. For evident reasons, it is usually better to work with such conditions in a place other than the ashram itself, from which there are good connections by car and by phone. A hotel is usually convenient.

C. The third condition consists of a mixed form of the two previous states, either as a combination of anxiety, confusion, and delusion, or where one condition alternates with another. Somatic disorders can also be present as part of the problem. Transpersonal or spiritual experiences may sometimes be present also as part of the

---

which is not accepted, hence remains outside as a persecutor; or with the almighty side of the mother, projected or interiorized, with the results of persecution or megalomania.

picture.[129] The abhyasi may, for example, report feeling intense bodily effects of transmission or experiencing visions, co-existing with hallucinations. This mixed state may appear as very serious and frightening but again, since the sufferer is at least partly aware of their abnormal condition, they will look for and accept help, so that an efficient therapeutic action is usually possible.

Again, three or four efficient abhyasis are necessary here and the use of allopathic drugs is most often inevitable, at least for a few days, in association with softer medical care. It seems also better to deal with such situations outside of the ashram. In each of these three kinds of situations, preceptors have usually been included in the team.

These kinds of psychiatric conditions, which may not have been so much apparent before the seminar, suddenly flare up within one or two days, usually as soon as the abhyasi is confronted with the particular characteristics of a spiritual seminar. These conditions also have a tendency to fade away more or less rapidly after such important spiritual events. Nevertheless, this can sometimes occur or become more obvious after the seminar is over.

During this therapeutic phase, the behaviour of abhyasis not directly involved in the intervention is also important; hence the following suggestions:

- A supportive attitude towards the therapeutic team, with positive thinking concerning the outcome of the situation,

---

[129] When symptoms do not converge into a classical psychiatric picture, they seem to be more prone to result in a 'mystical intoxication' after a short time, as noticed by Jacques Vigne (*Le Maître et le Thérapeute,* Albin Michel, 1991). This is what Ch. and S. Grof have called 'spiritual emergencies' [131], a term we don't adopt since it would create a confusion between two levels, in the sense of bringing the spiritual level down to the psychopathological.

both verbally and silently, rather than criticism and disqualification, which create even more confusion, doubts, and inefficiency.

- A quiet, discreet, and open attitude towards the disturbed abhyasis still considered as brothers or sisters, rather than over-sympathizing, gossiping, and dramatizing.
- The acceptance of not knowing immediately what is going on with the disturbed abhyasi. In other words, the capacity to wait patiently with confidence, after having possibly prayed, rather than pestering the intervening abhyasis with questions, hence disturbing the therapeutic action.

III. Follow-up

Then there is the follow-up period, sending the disturbed brother or sister home, and the kind of management required. Here are some problems we have had to face:

A. How to organize the return journey home in acceptable conditions. Administrative problems which must sometimes be solved rapidly, necessitating, for example, a medical certificate in order to get a priority on a waiting list for a flight. Problems of money and insurance have to be tackled, sometimes with the active participation of the disturbed abhyasi. The choice of the person accompanying him/her is also very important here, especially regarding their willingness, resourcefulness, and administrative competencies.

B. Which of the disturbed abhyasi's close relatives to inform and how, deserves some reflection, depending upon the situation and the character of these relatives, and how well they are equipped for such an event. The contact person must be prepared to face emotional reactions,

before rational information can be exchanged, in order to act on a realistic basis.

C. What the possible psychological effect of the abhyasi's arrival home will be must be thought through as carefully as possible, in order to prevent any additional difficulties, or the resurgence of former difficulties.

D. It is simple to prevent a relapse of such problems, but experience often shows that adequate measures are not always taken for firm additional psychological help. Experience also shows how often we are reluctant or unable to learn from a single painful event. In other words, the experience is often forgotten by everybody after a few weeks and the repetition is quite likely to happen again if responsibility for learning from the situation is not taken. In that case, responsibility is again displaced onto Master and his infallible blessings.

It seems reasonable that:

- The psychotropic medicine be continued for some time under the supervision of a competent practitioner who is, if possible, aware of 'spiritual realities'.
- The spiritual practice be modified during a reasonable period of time, with the preceptor working under the supervision of the Master. Usually attendance at satsangh and individual meditation has to be discontinued. Sometimes even individual sittings also have to be discontinued. Sometimes Chariji himself has given long-distance individual sittings to the disturbed abhyasis as a follow-up measure.

There are benefits derived by abhyasis who deal with these psychiatric problems. Personally, I have found that this is one of the most powerful opportunities for us to test and reinforce our capacity to remain calm, balanced, patient,

moderate, and vigilant, despite the tremendous potential of such disturbed conditions to contaminate us in one way or another. The reason for such contamination is that the state of a momentarily disturbed brother or sister always corresponds to at least some of our own tendencies. In other words, since such situations demand being aware of behaviour which will avoid further complications, one has the feeling of being in some way obliged to learn more intensively. One will also have the feeling of becoming more adequately prepared for other, even more stressful, situations that could come along.[130]

We also develop a greater sense of gratitude because of the more intensely felt necessity to be in remembrance of Him in such a situation, with the result of feeling closer to Him — hence feeling less emotional, more able to let go, if not yet surrendering — and experiencing more humility when we realise that we are not the real doers. In that condition, one of the rewards is becoming more aware of how Master prepares the events at a subtle level, so that we can benefit at the grosser levels to facilitate our so-called therapeutic intervention.

It seems to me to constitute a challenge to reinforce our courage and our faith in preparation for a fearless state. As Master explained on several occasions, it is in being confronted with more and more delicate and difficult situations that we strengthen ourselves up to the point of being able to face the 'final test' in the best possible condition(s).

---

[130] The management of these particular problems was also a test for the pertinence of the five principles of a Sahaj Margian psychology we have described earlier. As far as I am concerned, the principle of minimum interference revealed itself to be very useful, in order to avoid emotional escalation.

Being confronted by such intense emotional states also gives us the opportunity to practise the fifth, sixth, and seventh maxims, or at least to test ourselves on these particularly difficult maxims. As far as the eighth maxim is concerned, we can also test our reaction to the fact that for this intense benevolent work, instead of being paid, it is usually going to cost us some money (maybe as an effect of the invertendo principle?).[124]

For abhyasis having experienced such psychiatric conditions themselves, there is this comforting passage from one of the recent speeches of Chari:

"In spirituality, there is no early starter coming to the early end. On the contrary, a man who starts just when we are reaching the goal may still manage to reach the goal before us. I have seen this happening again and again. Here, progress is not to be measured in terms of time or years, or when a man begins or when he ends. Because without knowing it, without understanding it, everyone is already on the path. There is no such thing as coming onto the path. Life itself is the path.

"It is like a boat on a river. One boat goes a little to the left, a little to the right, you know, badly, shall we say, guided but the other boat goes straight — but both are in the same river. One fellow may even turn around because he is not yet able to operate his boat properly. He doesn't know how to fix the sails. He doesn't know how to row. He doesn't know how to handle the tiller. And he goes round and round, you see, and people are laughing at him, but he's learning. And beware, he may suddenly learn so much because he has made so many mistakes and understood how to handle so many adverse circumstances, that he may reach ahead of the supercilious do-gooders who left long before him. Given a bad current, the good sailor, as he thinks himself to be, who has never faced a frustration or an obstacle, is lost. He'll probably sink. The

---

[124] Maxim 5: Be truthful. Take miseries as divine blessings for your own good and be thankful.

Maxim 6: Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such.

Maxim 7: Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by others. Take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.

Maxim 8: Be happy to eat in constant Divine thought whatever you get, with due regard to honest and pious earnings.

fellow who has rammed into every boat, crashed into every obstruction, drowned himself twenty-five times — he's the expert."[131]

For the sake of the Mission itself, which means all of us, it is very important that such problems are faced in a realistic and responsible way, instead of reacted to in a defensive way, which includes repression, minimization, mockery, or aggression. The reputation of our Mission will largely benefit from such realistic management, which needs to be mainly preventive.

[131] *Love and Death,* 1992. p.114-115.

— 5 —

RESEARCH

A possible role of psychology in spirituality is research, but this for me is too touchy a subject. I have been involved in it with a lot of ambivalence in the past. As a consequence, I'll extricate myself from this subject by offering some short quotations. The first two are from Babuji, reported to me by sister Shashi Dhawan (May 1991, in Pune):

"When they do not search anymore, they do research!"

"Oh, they are doing research on my work?"

When I reminded Chariji of this first statement of Babuji, he made the less troublesome comment:

"To do research is also to search a second time."[132]

But a second statement is again much more worrying, showing our ambivalence, at least towards the search:

"People want to ask questions, but don't want to receive the answers."[133]

With or without our ambivalence, spiritual research is an integral part of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, as each abhyasi can see when reading the first pages of the *Abhyasis' Diary* sold in the Mission. The objectives of our Association are defined there, two of which deal with research: "To conduct research in the field of Yoga, and establish Research Institutes for the purpose." "To encourage research in Yoga,

---

[132] Informal conversation. Madras, July 1991.

[133] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p. 188.

including granting of assistance to the persons interested in carrying out this work." Along that line, the Sahaj Marg Research Institute has been created, which at the present time mainly organizes training courses for abhyasis.

Let us conclude with Chariji's answers during an informal conversation where the relationship between science, research and spirituality was considered:

PR: You have the strong force and the weak force! You know which is which?

Q: Yes, the strong force is at the subatomic level; the weak force is the gravitational force.

PR: The strong force is acting only within the nucleus and the electrons. It cannot work beyond that. But this weak force we can hardly measure is holding galaxies together. If you think of love as the weakest [inaudible] forceless force as we say in Sahaj Marg, now you see how beautifully it becomes logical: that the strongest force in physics can only hold atoms and nuclei together, the weak force can only hold galaxies together in the universe, and the forceless force holds everything together.

Now this third force is unknown to science. Therefore, you see, it is beyond rationality. Science deals with matter; spirituality doesn't deal with matter. So the laws of matter cannot explain it. Nevertheless it (spirituality) has its own laws. Now we have to discover those laws!

A: So it can become a science in a wider sense of this term?

PR: There is no such thing as becoming a science: you create a science from your discoveries. What happened before Newton existed? Was there no gravitation? Newton only said there is gravitation.

Q: He gave the name after having understood something.

PR: That's all. Science is only a fiction in that sense! You give a name to something and you say that it is science.

Q: Do you think it is one of the purposes of the Sahaj Marg Research Centres?

PR: My purpose...[laughter] is to make science into spirituality. But the scientists want to make everything into science. Now what is the use of science, because, as everybody knows, science can say how, but not why. It's well known. Spirituality can say how and why. So it must be a superior... subject, let us say science or art. But yet nobody comes to this; everybody goes to that. And they say 'we are intellectuals.' Eventually they say it is not intellectual what you have been speaking about.

Q: Ken Wilber is going a little broader, isn't it?

PR: Yes, because he is going with the mind. Not so much with the intellect, but the mind and the heart.

Q: What about these so-called 'emerging paradigms?'[134]

PR: Yes, because you see they are all going in the right direction. But it is like, you know, suppose a ship is sinking and you are holding on to a nice nylon rope and you jump. If you continue to hold on to that rope you'll not go out of the ship, of course. So you have to let go. So we can borrow from science all these things, but if you continue to hold on to science as the logic, you'll sink with science. So we have to let go, and this is surrender.

Q: A new word will be created for that?

PR: The word will come by itself. Words come after we have discovered something. When a child is born, you give it a name.

A rather long time after this conversation I got the persistent feeling that spirituality alone can constitute the essence of true interdisciplinary communication, both for the different scientific fields and for the human beings trying to communicate, to share their impressions, their feelings, and their ideas.

---

[134] Here is the definition given by Chariji to the question, "What is a paradigm?": "A paradigm is like parameters; it is a created field, within certain parameters, something like a hypothesis, not even a hypothesis. You can say perhaps it can be such a thing. So there are two 'perhaps'."

— 6 —

CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PART

I hope to have demonstrated that psychology constitutes an interlinking field of study between our solid body (that psychology takes care of through psychophysiology and psychosomatic medicine) and our subtle spirit, to which psychology also tried to stretch itself through transpersonal psychology.

In other words, it is a discipline which explores *maya*, and may help us in unmaking the ego and its grossest tricks. But we must accept its limitations, since psychology deals with duality, with forms, with the thought process, as functions of human nature.

Another way of saying the same thing is to qualify psychology and its roles in spirituality, as part of the middle state Lalaji called *raj*, (between *tam* and *sat*),[135] and which contains the mind, a crucial ingredient for practising raja yoga.

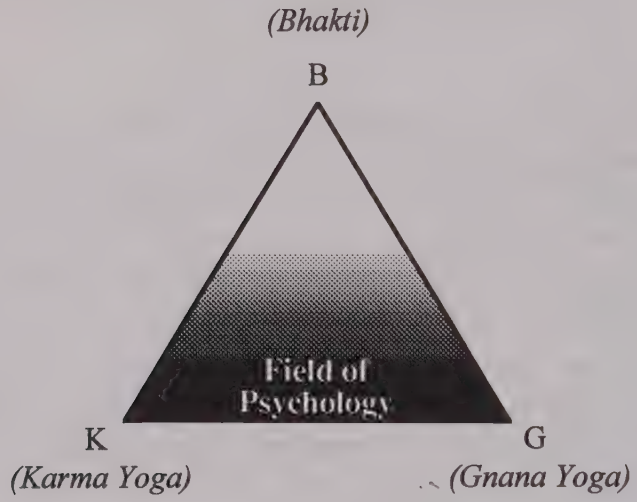
As a consequence, we may perhaps suggest that the roles of psychology in spirituality constitute an important part of *gnana yoga*, and that its own aim or limit would be the acquisition of a kind of wisdom.

Putting it another way, psychology should be considered as an aspect of spirituality, i.e., its preparatory or preliminary aspect, situated at the base of the famous triangle (I don't know if isosceles or equilateral) that Chariji drew during the

---

[135] *Truth Eternal*, p.23, 24 and 53.

preceptor's workshop in Augerans (July 1990), and which is reproduced below:



Psychology deals with human functions, and as a result it takes time. In other words, it goes through a slow process of deaths and rebirths, destruction and reconstruction, along the different stages of evolution, or so-called states of consciousness, in order to approach spirituality. Hence, it includes the often painful mourning processes.

The main role or help of spiritualized psychology could be to lead us to our psychological adulthood and to attaining nobility of character (or natural character), especially when we were blocked at an early stage of our psychological growth.

To become effective, all these roles of psychology, all these means, all these tools, should be dispensed with the heart. With love. This is a prerequisite if psychology is to be linked to its natural and vital spiritual source.

As a consequence of the above statement, psychology and its tools should not be opposed to spirituality in a dualistic manner resulting in stagnation at both human and spiritual levels. It seems much more preferable to consider them in a continuity, one (psychology) leading to the other (spirituality), the latter containing the former.

"It has come to my experience for the first time in spiritual history that both body and soul idea have got to be got rid of. Afterwards, consciousness of consciousness should also bid farewell. The scientific world may not agree with my views because this thing is beyond matter and science cannot explain it. Real psychology is beyond mind, and the Reality is beyond and yet beyond," Babuji said.

At such a stage, we can say that what is on the other hand usually called psychology has reduced itself to a very thin thing, as Chariji admonished me recently!

— 7 —

MASTER ANSWERS

During the MD-56 session that took place in Hyderabad in October 1991, several questions revolved around the relationship between psychology and spirituality:

- Can Sahaj Marg be used as a psychotherapy?
- Is it possible to have a psychotherapy parallel to Sahaj Marg sadhana?
- Relaxation is a part of psychiatric therapy. But isn't Sahaj Marg a more natural and unforced way of relaxation? So why not go to Sahaj Marg directly?
- Will the study of psychology avoid spiritual pitfalls?
- Can spirituality cure psychological diseases?
- What is the role of psychology on our character and on the external behaviour in our daily work, with our boss, etc.?

The following extracts are reproduced here as the answers given to the above questions.[136]

PR: I am neither a psychologist nor a doctor, but in my experience, until homeopathy came along, I don't think we distinguished very specially between physiological and psychological problems. I know that especially when the joint family life was there, there were not so many tensions and stresses. And there were always older family people

---

[136] As I said in the section on Methodology, my own answers have been partly cut or corrected in order to make them more clear, whereas those of Chariji are reproduced as precisely as the tapes were audible. Breaks in tape are indicated by (...).

available to do the counseling. It was in a very simple village type of way, you see, talking to the people, advising them. I think most of these problems were amenable to domestic counseling. What you would now report to professional counseling was dealt with by domestic counselors, namely the grandparents, elder uncles, or even neighbours. I remember that even mental asylums were very few in the old days, and people were averse to sending even family members with mental symptoms to these asylums, because in India we have always had a suspicion of hospitalization and hospital treatment. In fact, in our villages there is this general theory, or we can call it superstition or prejudice, that the hospital is a one-way business: you enter, but you never come out. That is a sort of tradition that has been prevailing. So this question of differentiating between psychiatric and physiological, and things like that, is of recent origin. And as brother Ferdinand has said just now, this new way of treating, that is, by way of psychoanalysis, psychiatry, things like that, has just begun to crop up. I don't think they have met with much success. That, only social changes can tell us what is happening.

Even physiological medicines were created mostly at home. Children were delivered at home, mothers were delivered at home of their babies. Most sicknesses were treated at home. Old grandmother remedies, because doctors were few and far between. There was no fuss. You see, today for a headache we go to a doctor, for a pain in the toe we go to a doctor. So the medical profession has probably prospered as our will to look after ourselves has been progressively weakened. And the elimination of the joint family from the Indian scene is now causing more and more disorders, sickness, mutual recrimination, you know, property problems. In India, I think most of it is property problems. Marital problems are not so prevalent [laughter]. I suppose on occasion a husband beats his wife, or a wife beats her husband, and it has a salutary effect. It is not meant to be a derogatory statement. I am telling you what happened, how it was dealt with, you see. Also there were the religious, shall we say, systems, which prescribe the relationship between a man and his wife, even the most intimate relationship, so that there were periods of abstinence, there were periods of togetherness, and I think that kept the flame of love burning, so there was less psychological disorder. Today there is oneness all the time, union going on all the time, and eventually it becomes a bore, and people start quarreling. So you need counseling. My father used to ask very pungent questions, what we call *patchai-patchai* in Tamil: "Why for such a simple thing do you need counseling?" So I think counseling and the need for counseling are modern problems. Hitherto, we have had not much experience of these things in India. I hope we don't need them in the future, too.

FW: In the West, for about twenty years, the number of beds in psychiatric hospitals have diminished drastically, for several reasons, and

now most of the psychiatric problems are dealt with on an outpatient basis. So people are coming for marital problems, family problems, including symptoms in children like enuresis or asthma or school problems, job problems, or inner conflicts, anxiety, depression, delusions, psychosomatic symptoms, to the office of a psychologist, of a psychiatrist, or of a specially trained general practitioner whom we can again call a family doctor. For my part, I give psychological training to such family doctors, in order to contribute to a de-specialization of our medical practice, which has become abnormally specialized in the West.

PR: I would like to say something in general. I think there is a feeling among some of you that anything that applies to the mind is coming within the field of psychology. I don't think so; it's not my own view. Psychology must be within altered states of consciousness or disturbed conditions. Therapy comes only when we have to restore health. Physiological therapies, like medical therapies, and for the mind you have the psychiatric, the psychoanalytical therapeutic measures.

So, unless an abhyasi has a disturbed mind, for any reason, it may be guilt, may be the idea of being a sinner, maybe a bloated ego, so many things — unless they suffer from these problems they don't, properly speaking, come under the purview or orbit of a psychotherapeutic process. So, "How does psychoanalysis or psychology help an abhyasi?" is a wrong question. Can we help an abhyasi with a psychological disturbance? This Ferdinand has just answered. For healthy abhyasis, we don't need these things.

So we have to clearly understand that this subject proper, either as a subject or as a course of therapy, concerns only a certain section of abhyasis, not everybody. We are being exposed to it so that we may know how it can help under certain situations, given certain conditions. It is not that everybody needs to go for psychoanalysis with a psychiatrist, for a session with a psychiatrist. So don't mix up these things.

FW: I can add that, at least in the West, certain abhyasis have difficulties just because they are at the same time in a psychotherapeutic process and practising their sadhana. I think it is most of the time the result of their ambivalence, or their lack of confidence in the method and in the Master. The quest for a therapy can be understood psychologically as a quest for pleasure, for something giving more satisfaction, or compensation at a certain level other than their spiritual practice. But most of the time the result consists in more complications and suffering for the abhyasi. Chariji has already warned preceptors about this tendency regarding themselves and the abhyasis they are working with. Of course, for preceptors it may seem momentarily easier to send them to a specialist than to cope with them directly. In other words, I consider the Sahaj Marg system to be, in itself, psychotherapeutic. But maybe it would be

more clear to say it in another way: for healthy abhyasis, the system is most suitable to promote our growth, from the psychological levels of consciousness to the spiritual ones. What is requested, as Babuji has already insisted upon many times, is our co-operation, which means that we put our will and our confidence and our vigilance into becoming like Him. If we do so, we don't need psychotherapy.

PR: Spirituality is not meant for moulding your external behaviour. That is a consequence of spirituality. Spirituality is not meant for this. It is meant to enable us to reach the goal. The incidental benefit should be changes in behaviour, changes in your character, which you are supposed to do by co-operation. As Ferdinand has just cautioned you, you should not use psychology [laughter] as another excuse for your non-performance and non-co-operation on the spiritual way.

I know that many Westerners have told me when talking about Sahaj Marg, or when I am talking to abhyasis in a particular way, "Oh, but it is only psychotherapy as I call it." I said, "Yes, but psychotherapy is not spirituality." When we talk it is only speech, but what we talk about determines whether it is spiritual or not. Suppose you are talking about Hindi films or Telugu films; it does not make it spiritual. So the content is what matters. The content of a spiritual practice is spiritual growth.

As Ferdinand pointed out, there is a great change, though it can be a total change if we but co-operate in the practice in the sadhana and work upon ourselves as stipulated in the practice.

Please remember what I said earlier, that all these therapies are for disturbed people, not for normal situations when you have problems with your wife who won't let you come for meditation, or the wife cannot come because the husband prevents her, or because the daughter-in-law cannot allow the father-in-law to come. These are purely domestic situations to be handled tactfully by you. They don't need the help of a psychologist. We cannot immediately rush to a psychologist and say, "Please call my grandmother, she won't allow me to go for meditation." She is not sick; she is only prejudiced. Prejudice maybe, at a particular level, is a form of sickness, but it is not that sickness which demands a therapeutic course of treatment.

So we should not rush for aid for what we can do ourselves, and the more you go to others for help when you can help yourself, the more you are weakening yourself, and eventually you have to go to a doctor. You see, for every headache, you take medicine, and for every small thing you rush to a doctor. Eventually you become totally impotent to handle yourself. Then perhaps you need a psychiatrist. So the idea of personal or self-help is always the best. God helps those who help themselves. In between, we don't need any therapy.

So please don't use what you are learning here as a third prop or a fourth prop to bolster up your non-practising Sahaj Marg and say, "No, no, I am psychologically sick, I am very worried, I am afraid of losing my job. What should I do? Shall I try in Switzerland?" Not like that. This is to prepare you to understand that there is a subject called psychology, and as Ferdinand said in his introduction this morning, it originally meant the science of the soul. Properly speaking, spirituality should be called psychology. But unfortunately, spirituality started meaning so many things including spiritism, animism, totemism, you know, all these 'isms', and now we have to distinguish between spiritism, spirituality, spiritualism, religion, all these funny things. So the more you chop things into pieces, the more confusion. We should try to integrate everything into one grand synthesis, and that is Sahaj Marg.

Therefore, Sahaj Marg, in some elements of its approach, may resemble a psychological approach. It is only a resemblance. That he looks like my brother doesn't make him my brother, though he is my brother spiritually. Resemblance has nothing to do here. Therefore, that some aspects of our spiritual counseling look like psychological counseling, it looks so to the Westerners. To us it is mere mutual exchange. One trying to bolster up the confidence of the other, in himself, to resolve the situation which perhaps he has created himself. So a healthy Shri Ram Chandra Mission with healthy members should never require the service of a psychologist.

FW: I fully agree. It was perhaps necessary to use and discuss the term psychology, but as Chariji warned me in advance, "After having taken much time at the outset of the process for psychology, you'll see it is going to get thinner." And as an abhyasi working in this field professionally, I can and I want to co-operate in this thinning cure of psychology. But at the same time we should realise that the Master and His method are therapeutic for us, are a cure for us, in the sense that we progress psychologically also when we do our sadhana properly and develop a sufficient link with the Master.

Maybe I can add something about my daily psychotherapeutic practice, so that I can appear less as a strange person bringing confusion about these questions of relationship between psychotherapy and spirituality. Since I have been in Sahaj Marg, my previous psychological training is no longer so useful to me, and not as necessary as before. Well sometimes, when I am tired, when I am not remembering Him, it is reassuring to have some technical abilities at my disposal in order to manage rather difficult situations without being dragged down myself. But before I joined the Mission, I used to be very tired after seven or eight hours of psychotherapy in a day, whereas now it is different, providing the link with the Master remains open often, or is most of the time established. In that case, it is as if patients or clients work with much

less resistance, are more open, less projecting their problems onto their close relations (including myself).

So this influence of the Master in my daily work as a psychotherapist is an example of something everybody here can experience in all kinds of daily life relationships. As Chariji just said, your boss is also a human being; we should not be afraid. As sister Shashi said to me recently, "With Sahaj Marg, with the link to the Master, we become bold. Not at all necessarily arrogant or impertinent, but bold, because we have less fear, ideally no more fear at all."

Q: This was a very complicated subject for me. I couldn't get much out of it, so instead of listening to the course, I was praying. Is the prayer not sufficient?

PR: Babuji Maharaj used to say, "When we start explaining simple things, they become complicated. When my Master started this system of permitting children to recite the Prayer once in the morning when they get up and once at night when going to bed, obviously it was designed to have some effect.

Now we know, in childhood we all learn by heart so many things, including the multiplication table. We may not know what values are, we may not know the mathematical value of two and two for instance, but "Two ones are two, two twos are four, two threes are six," we go on reciting. At some stage, when we enter the field of mathematics, we remember this and we are able to apply it. It is a sort of, I don't know, it is not really subliminal teaching, but it is something like that. That we teach the child without the child really knowing what it is learning, not even understanding that it is learning something. For it, it is an exciting exercise.

Recently we had a course in mathematics from one of our friends in France. He came all the way to Madras to give us one 'five day-course', during which he said he would take us up to the post-graduate level in mathematics, starting from zero. I wish Dr. Chandrika Prasad had been there. It was very stimulating. You know, I was always very afraid of mathematics. But when I told him this in Augerans last year, he said, "I have a course in which I will prepare the most stupid student up to the stage of what they call the baccalaureate in one year!" It was a challenge, you see, he accepted. It was a challenge to the stupid boy who was going to be prepared for this, more it was a challenge for me to see how this could be done. So when I asked him, "How are you going to do this?", he came, and the way of teaching was so fantastically simple and stimulating, that I can say I understood many things which I have not understood at school.

So you see, what is being taught is the subject. How it is being taught is more relevant to what is being taught than otherwise. Because when the teacher is using the wrong approach, the wrong techniques, and if he hates the students whom he is teaching, or he is teaching only for money, the teaching falls by the way. And, like our friend just now said, there is no interest.

We are repeating a prayer. Now why did you repeat the prayer? Because you believe in it. You know, I used to wear this sacred thread of a *Brahmin Vaishnava*, and we had great belief in it. At night when we were alone, we held on to the knot (what they call the *Brahma Mudicchu*) and slept.

So anything which helps us is an aid. It does not have to be something tangible, it does not have to be proven in efficacy. If that brahma-knot could lull me to sleep with all my fear of ghosts and I don't know, vampires... I had gone to a movie, I think it was a Frankenstein monster movie, and came back shattered. But I was asleep in five minutes because I held on to this thing, and just recited the *Gayatri mantra* two or three times and I was blissfully asleep. No Frankenstein could disturb me.

These are psychological aids that we create for ourselves. The prayer is one such. When we are in trouble and we say, "O Master, thou art the real Goal," our mind is diverted. You see, personally I believe that the efficacy is in its ability to divert the mind away from the problem which is obsessing us.

Constant remembrance is the ultimate therapeutic facility available to us. Because when you are remembering the Master, you cannot think of anything else, remember anything else. I make a bold, I make a very bold statement, a very bold claim, that it is the ultimate therapeutic measure beyond which there can be nothing. Why? Because it is a Master we are remembering. It is a person with whom we have associated, whom we have loved, love still, in whom we have faith, who has performed so many things out of the ordinary, the most important being the transformation we see in ourselves.

In such a person, when you have faith and when you remember Him, it is like a child running to its mother every time it has a problem. What on earth does the child know about the mother's capacity to deal with its problem? Babuji Maharaj, when speaking of love, said, "Mother love is the highest, because if a tiger were to attack a child, she would hug the child and protect it, even at the cost of being killed herself. Fathers would probably run away, but mothers will sacrifice themselves."

So, you see, on this idea of sacrifice — that this person will be able and willing to sacrifice his life for me — rests the pinnacle of confidence. Lowest level of confidence — yes, if I ask my friend for five rupees, he

will give me. This is a low level of confidence. I can always approach B.J.C. Babu for a ten rupee loan; he will not let me down. But when it is a life and death situation, which we very often confront, we resort to prayer, because now we invoke the power of the almighty Master.

It has been my contention — I don't know whether anybody here will agree with it — that it is our faith which makes that work. I have asked Babuji this. "Why in some cases our prayer works, and not in other cases? Why some people's prayers are answered and others not?" He used to smile his blissful smile and say, "You are intelligent; you think over it." I have been thinking over it for thirty years. I find that whenever an abhyasi has faith and prays, the prayer is answered. It is as if the faith in the abhyasi opens the channel for the Master's power to flow through.

Similar faith we must have in everything that we do. Suppose we go to a psychiatrist and say, "What is this nonsense, this psychiatrist, Western systems, what do they know of us?" Many people in India talk like that. Then you are not going to benefit from it. So, this prayer, to say that it has been packed with power, is nonsense. To say that it has been charged, perhaps it's also nonsense, though I won't hazard making that statement myself.

But it works in some way on the children, because they have the faith that their father or their mother has told them to do it. And what father or mother has told them to do must be good for them. When the child begins to lose this faith in the parents, it is then that parental authority breaks down, and the need for a separate authority, institutionalized or personal, comes into the picture. If the parents can maintain unbroken this relationship of love supported by faith between themselves and their offspring, everything will go well for the future.

Now to prevent this breach, perhaps, Babuji Maharaj has introduced this idea of prayer for children, and when they do it — you know, in the Christian tradition you find, I have seen stories, I have seen movies, where a small child of three is sent up to her bedroom with a candle, and there she is afraid. She looks out of the windows, she sees all goblins, wolves, but she tightly closes her eyes, kneels by the bed side and prays; in a moment she is asleep.

So you see, whether it is the prayer value, or whether it is the value of the faith that the child reposes in that prayer, or whether it is something that invokes the aid of the almighty Master at that moment in time, all this questioning is redundant. It works. Therefore, we must understand that what works is a system. To find a system which works is crazy. Make it work. And here in Sahaj Marg we are involved in making things work.

Now meditation has been on the Indian scene for thousands of years. How many people attained liberation? Maybe a handful, two handfuls, ten handfuls. Who was the highest evolved? One person, our great friend Kabirdas. What happened to the others: Vasishta, Vishwamitra, and all these great rishis? There is no mention. Why? They were *tapasvis*.

Kabir has no tradition of going to do *tapasya* in the jungles. He was a weaver, not known to be a Muslim or a Hindu clearly, even today, both fighting for him because he was great, who spoke broken things in broken languages of the utmost importance and significance. How did he develop? The story goes that because he was a weaver, Muslim weaver, he could not approach the Brahmin Ramananda. He would not give him *diksha* (initiation). But he knew this man used to go for his bath down the Ganga every day. So one morning he slept on one of the steps by which Ramananda had to pass, and when Ramananda stumbled over him, he said "Ram, Ram," and this fellow took it as his initiation. This is one example. The guru did not intend to initiate, but this *sishya* (disciple) said it is initiation. "You have uttered before me the sacred name Ram, Ram. It is for me enough." From that he developed to Kabir. According to Babuji Maharaj, he is the only person who is at the sixteenth circle in our circles. Of others, there is no mention.

Then you have the story of Ekalavya, who created a *putli*, a model of his guru and prayed to it and practised archery, and Drona was stunned when he saw him. He was a menace to Arjuna and, of course, he resorted to a cheap trick to rob this fellow of his prowess, which is one of the shoddy episodes of the *Mahabharata*. That a guru should descend to such mean levels just to protect a cherished *chela*, was not becoming, in my opinion, but that is by the way. This shows what faith can do.

It is when we lose faith that mental problems begin. Now this is a clear linkage between spirituality and psychology. I hope Ferdinand will not misunderstand what I am saying, but psychology in a sense is essentially for those who have lost faith in themselves, in their environment, in their parents, in their society, in their future. There is a bewilderment about what we are going to do for the future. "I am lost," they say. In a sense, it is for the lost people. If faith can be restored, which is what most therapists try to do, mental health follows automatically.

When a situation is so frightening, alarming, that I cannot see how I can probably cope with it — we all pass through these things, I am passing through it myself now — there is a tendency to run away from the situation. Then you need this sort of help. But if you can still have faith in the prayer and keep, you know, chanting it with your eyes closed, thinking of that grand old man who gave us this prayer, surely benefit comes.

So therapeutically speaking, psychotherapeutically speaking, any psychologist will fail unless he is able to restore confidence and faith in his patient. This is my considered opinion. It is not a loose, flippant talk, because I am by no means a psychologist, nor am I familiar with psychological literature. But this is my finding after twenty-five, twenty-eight, thirty years of spiritual practice, you see, under the highest Personality ever. And in that, if you have faith, we don't need any therapy.

People talk of going to doctors. Babuji also said, if it is illness, you must go to the doctor. But that was for the people who had no faith. Again, see, when you distinguish between the doctor and the Master, and say Babuji cannot do this because he is no doctor, we limit his capacity. He may cure it, or we are given the strength to bear with our diseases.

For instance, my headache. Yesterday somebody was reciting, Babuji tried so many things, "All nerves are swollen." He gave me sitting after sitting and said, "Lalaji's grace, my prayers." Nothing happened. He took me to his *unani*. He said, "This is the greatest *unani* in town," and the *unani* said, "*Saheb aap ki Dhuva aur meri dava,*" — how can it fail? That also failed. Eventually Babuji said, "Your case is in the hands of God."

Now I know that man is playing a trick on me. Because for me, He is my God. So that case is still in His hands. For some reason, He wishes me to continue to suffer. So be it. Now I have a headache but I don't suffer. Almost every day I have headache. This is not an exaggeration. And it is going on inside me even now when I am speaking, when I am sleeping, dong-dong-dong, as if somebody is beating a hammer, but it no longer bothers me.

So we have this beautiful principle that what is not curable, let Him give me the strength to bear. Now why should you want a cure? You see, we want a promotion. But suppose Babuji makes it possible for me to live with my income without a promotion; why should I worry about an increment? "No, no sir, everybody is getting." "No, that is Lalaji." For that, there is no spiritual benefit, there is no spiritual help; you should not ask for it.

Babuji has said, "Needs will be fulfilled, not wants." So if your sickness needs to be healed, he will look to it. If it is not interfering with your spiritual progress, or your spiritual work as a preceptor, why not go with that illness and do the work? After all, it is a truism that there is no one hundred percent healthy person ever present on earth. There is something or the other the matter with it.

It is more of a truism, in psychological terms, that there is no totally sane person. We are all psychotic or neurotic to some extent. It is a

question of stepping over the balancing line — an invisible line which divides the sane from the insane, the psychotic from the mentally healthy, the neurotic from the mentally healthy. Once we cross that line, then we come under the purview of the therapeutic persons whom we call psychologists, psychoanalysts, whatever it be.

So when we talk of children being given this prayer, it is a very potent thing, because they do it under the instructions of the Master. If the parents are already abhyasis who have faith in the Master and love Him, they automatically derive the benefit of that faith and love in themselves. Their reciting the prayer once in the morning and once in the evening strengthens that, and strengthens and builds a direct connection with the Master now, which doesn't have to go through the parents.

That is how they become abhyasis, even. I mean, there are girls of twelve and thirteen, and boys of eight who want to be abhyasis. There is one fellow right here pestering me for the last one year. He's probably nine years old, and every time he sees me, he says, "What about it, today?" Now that is the thing we should value.

Now how to keep that flame alive? There comes our training. You cannot just push him off and say you are too young. This was the way the old parents dealt with us — the elder generation of the elder days. Now you have to be more understanding. You have to teach him why it is not possible now.

Like, for instance, we don't take insane people because, in meditation, you have to use your mind to train your mind. And when a man is out of his mind, how can he use that mind to train himself? It is like a man trying to ride a horse when there is no horse. Children can make believe by climbing the branch of a tree and sitting there and saying, "This is my horse." But it will not work in spirituality. So we say: let a doctor say this man is now medically fit, then we take him. It is not that we throw them into the dungeon forever. If they are cured, now they are possible candidates for meditation. It is not that we abhor mental sicknesses, or that we are afraid of insane people. It is that they cannot help themselves. Some people ask me the question, "Does it mean your Master cannot help them?" Certainly not. He can help them in other ways.

We must remember that Babuji Maharaj said this Shri Ram Chandra Mission membership is his direct *aulad.*[137] He is bound to help. But there are stories of how he helped people outside the Mission. A saint in Baghdad for instance, or a saint in Timbuktu. So wherever help is needed, His help flows. We should not pride ourselves and, you know, think that only we are the privileged or the blessed. All are blessed who

---

[137] *Aulad* means family or children.

seek His blessings. All will be helped who seek His help. All who have faith shall receive.

This is the ultimate psychology: mental health through faith. The faith which says that nothing lasts forever. Sicknesses must go. Penury must resolve itself into riches some day, if I work for it. In this, if I have faith in the Master and say my Master will help me, and with conviction and faith, help surely comes. Any therapeutic measure which doesn't strengthen the faith of the patient, whether physiological or psychological is not going to do him much good, this is my feeling, you see.

Q: Please elaborate a little more about intellectualism as a defense mechanism.

FW: If we don't understand what people tell us with our heart, a distance is created between these persons and ourselves. As a result we have all kinds of misunderstandings and these endless games between people — the favourite of these games being to try desperately to be right, or to have the last word. This game we play with our parents, with our husband, our wife, our colleague, our brother or sister abhyasi, sometimes even for giving the right interpretation to what our spiritual guide tried to tell us on a particular occasion, like today, for instance. Even in these cases we have the danger of fighting together, instead of emulating each other about an interesting or stimulating spiritual topic, to use the words of Babuji or Chari. I have personally assisted and participated in such games, which are perverting the content, sterilizing an action that could have been useful or productive, with the result of strengthening our ego and our adhesion to duality, hence forming borders, separations, and dejection.

For example, here and now a defense mechanism seems to be going on, maybe more projective in nature than utilizing intellectualization, consisting of saying that psychology is nothing good and must be rejected. But we have to face the fact that we have psychological problems to solve during our journey as living human beings, as abhyasis, whether you come from the West or from the East. We can solve these problems, with the help of faith and will, or we can aggravate our tendencies, when we are not willing to change our behaviours and character.

By speaking of these defense mechanisms, like intellectualizing, I am trying to share with you some introspective means in order to help us to change. It is well known that when something new is offered which gives us an opportunity to face ourselves, to see how we hide ourselves, we try to escape by different strategies. We manage by some means to disqualify this new opportunity that is about to reveal something we don't want to see too clearly for fear that we would be obliged to change it. So I was prepared for these disqualifications, but I must tell you that I was

expecting much more criticism from you. So far it is very moderate, maybe because of the meditation we had just before these small group discussions and this panel. So I cannot compare our experience of today with the experience I have had for some years with medical students and the technique we called Philips 66. But each time we ourselves introduce something new in our job or our family, like me here today, we must have a sufficient amount of faith, patience, and tenacity, to face these protective defenses created so quickly by the ego in order to protect its own stability.

For example, when speaking of the misuses of the method, of the Mission, and of the Master, we will have an opportunity to understand intellectually what we are misusing, how we are misusing it, as if the person concerned was somebody else. But my personal hope is that, if I get some knowledge of these mechanisms — providing I have the honesty and the courage to see that I am doing it wrongly also — it will let me feel more clearly, more precisely what I have to change.

As far as I am concerned, it was useful to recognize some of my defense mechanisms, because knowing them had the result of disturbing me more and more, up to the point of deciding to get rid of them. In other words, I came here with the hope that something of psychology, some explanation, will be touching you, hence will be useful for you as it has been for me, in order to become more effective abhyasis. Of course in one sentence, or in such a short time as the duration of one training course, our characters are not going to be changed. I have not solved the problem even for myself yet. But I am sure I am not going to solve it by means of intellectualizing in order to protect my character as it is now, as a production of my ego. On the contrary, some help, and maybe some pain also, will come, if I consent to open myself, to open my heart.

Q: What about emotions in Sahaj Marg, and their functions?

PR: According to my Master, emotion has no place in Sahaj Marg. Feelings yes, but no emotions. Emotions are cheap duplicates; you can say they are frauds! He also said that feelings cannot be visible normally. Emotion is visible. Maybe that is why we depend more on emotion to influence others, because it is a visible thing. We can weep, we can groan in their face, we can become angry, things like that. But the thing which makes the spiritual development is feeling. And the feeling is, of course, love. So that is the answer to that question.

PART TWO

Considerations on the Uses and Misuses of Sahaj Marg

"Here, in Sahaj Marg, we are involved in making things work."

Shri P. Rajagopalachari

INTRODUCTION

WHY THIS SUBJECT WAS CHOSEN

In the first part we have:

- described psychologies as they appeared in the West, up to the current trend, i.e., transpersonal psychology, which may be used to bridge with 'oriental psychology', with yoga or with spirituality;
- adopted five basic principles or rules, supposed to be operant in a so-called spiritualized psychology, such as Sahaj Marg psychology;
- described the tools of such a 'natural' psychology, in order to understand its role(s) of preparation, of education, of correction and treatment, of communication, and possibly of research; and
- suggested reducing the field of psychology to altered states of consciousness or disturbed conditions, as Chariji proposed in the last chapter of part one.

By means of the above processes, I hope that a certain amount of discernment and clarification has been brought to light on the roles of psychology in spirituality. Using them as a basis for our understanding and comprehension of the various psychological reactions to the method, to the Mission and to the Master, it is hoped this experiment will be convincing. In other words the role of psychology will be to help us understand our numerous misuses to the three Ms, and to describe Master's spiritual actions in order to put us in the direction of the proper use.

Another reason for choosing this important subject is a personal one, in that I have been very preoccupied by this topic. During the first six months that I practised Sahaj Marg, I was feeling very happy with the three Ms (method, Mission, and Master). I was in a kind of honeymoon state.

During a second phase, however, I could not avoid witnessing many relationship problems between abhyasis. I tried to contribute to their solution as if I had been appointed to take care of them. At that time, I also became a preceptor, which gave me both more courage and more permission to act. As a result, I could observe many emotional reactions, including my own, and at a certain point I felt a lot of confusion, and also some disgust and contempt, for others and then for myself. These feelings were partly due to the fact that nothing in these groups of abhyasis was happening as it should have according to my experience as a professional.

My dominant feeling at that time was that everything was going unusually fast, so that I was always lagging behind. As a consequence, I was going from a feeling of powerlessness, to an arrogant reaction *vis-à-vis* so-called spiritualized persons who were not behaving like adults. It took me several months of swimming in these agitated waters to be able to start considering these strange and intense phenomena from a spiritual angle. This allowed me to tolerate the situation, instead of just reacting to it, and to understand these difficulties as my own creations. I started to look for other patterns of personal behaviour, outwardly and inwardly. I found some help in the Sahaj Marg literature, but the main help came when I was able to observe how Chariji himself dealt with such friction among abhyasis, including preceptors. My conclusion was what he demonstrated:

"To find a system which works is crazy. Make it work. Here, in Sahaj Marg, we are involved in making things work."

His example, which I was able to observe on so many occasions, seemed to me to be the only valid one, as far as ethics, morality, or efficacy were concerned. Despite the fact that he had said, "In spirituality there is no place for neurotics,"[138] he was willing to deal with us to enable us to progress, in the sense that we would not remain neurotics forever. So maybe the writing of these chapters is one of the means offered to me, by His grace, to progress towards a healthier stage regarding the method, the Mission, and the Master.

"What you expect to receive, you must also be prepared to give. So again and again we come to this problem, you see, my relationship to the teaching, my relationship to the practice, my relationship with the Master — the Master, the Mission, the method. With each of them I have to develop the right relationship: one of obedience, one of the attitude of cherishing and protecting, one of total love and surrender.

"So we have this triumvirate again. I must want to protect and nourish the Mission. Protect it from what? From calumny, inside and out. From dangers to its existence, keeping it, you know, the physical properties clean, reading the books. Method: I must follow it with absolute obedience, because if it is not so, it is a half-hearted venture, and nothing will succeed when it is half-hearted. Master: love and adoration. Again *karma yoga, gnana-yoga, bhakti yoga...*"[139]

So, in order to try to contribute to the proper use of the method, the Mission and the Master, the procedure proposed is the following:

- Try to understand some of the roots of our numerous misuses of the three Ms.
- Describe some of the most frequent misuses of the method, of the Mission, and of the Master as I have

---

[138] Hyderabad training course, 8 October 1991.

[139] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.186.

observed them so far in myself and in other brothers and sisters.[140]

- Collect from our Master's words, or from spiritual guides belonging to other traditions, some indications for a proper use of the same.

This procedure is a rather delicate one, because in a sense, we should not speak about our misuses, our pathology, our negative tendencies, since in our *sadhana* we are taught to think positively, and even to emit positive suggestions, which should be as subtle as possible. However, psychology says that in order to correct ourselves, we should be conscious of the problems we have, and if we are not we should become conscious of them. On the other hand, denouncing or criticizing others may provoke resistance and be inefficient, if not obnoxious. However, if we make clear what has to be shown, in a gentle, general way, with a maximum of lightness and humour and, above all, love, the information given may be used positively for discriminating between what we can remove and what we must retain or take, in order to progress towards the Goal.

With Master's help, something useful will come out of these thoughts, allowing us to tell the truth, without diluting and without hurting our brothers and sisters. Personally, I feel I still need a lot of training in this respect.

If somebody is using the method, the Mission and the Master properly, he or she will be progressing smoothly, both psychologically and spiritually. It is also right to assume that each time an abhyasi fails to use the method, the Mission or

---

[140] I am conscious that separating the three Ms is artificial, but it seemed to me clearer to do so, with the hope that abhyasis will realise the synthesis by themselves. I have also added a chapter about proper use and misuses of preceptors, to make it more complete.

the Master properly, he or she is not going to progress smoothly, or perhaps not even going to progress at all. Such an abhyasi may even regress. There is only one way to use the method, the Mission, and the Master properly. There is not much else to say about it. But the misuses of these three Ms can be so diverse, so different in their details, that an entire book could be written on them. This is not astonishing in itself, because now we are in the realm of psychology, of *maya*, of the ego with all its tricks and cunning.

Again, the description of these misuses is given here to help us accept that they exist, the kind of form they take and that we have to face them in order to stimulate our will power, as explained by Chariji in a preceptors' seminar:

"Know what you are. Don't cheat yourself. Don't tell lies to yourself... I think confession in the real sense must have meant originally this — be true to yourself; confess to yourself, 'This I am.' Let me reconcile myself with my Self. Let me be able to achieve such a state of integration that I can look myself in the face, look at myself in the mirror and say, 'Yes, it is okay.'"[141]

[141] *A Preceptor's Guide*, 1989, vol. II, p.50.

— 8 —

THE METHOD, THE MISSION, AND THE MASTER: PROPER USE AND MISUSES

"If we are not progressing, it is because we create problems inside ourselves, by ourselves, for ourselves."

Shri P. Rajagopalachari

Difficulties on one's spiritual path are inevitable because of the very nature of a human being not yet merged, not yet realised, or even not yet liberated. This human being is still stuck in duality, still divided, usually split in several if not many pieces, which are, moreover, cut off from one another most of the time — what we call 'splitting' in Western psychology.

This elementary truth, has at least two consequences: The abhyasi will not be able to avoid ambivalence and its inner and outer manifestations; and a more or less important part of this ambivalence will be unconscious and remain unconscious for a certain time.

Now if we agree with the above reasoning, it is useless to ask ourselves if we are ambivalent to the spiritual way we have chosen. The answer is already known: we can't avoid being ambivalent unless we are already unified by having surrendered, consciously or unconsciously. I hope that I have not hurt anybody enough to raise resistance against continuing.

Ambivalence will be considered here as a symptom. As a sign of disease,[142] it must have at least one cause. Let us assume that the ultimate cause of ambivalence is the fear of psychological death, i.e., the death of the ego.

- So the root fear is the fear of death, namely the fear of psychological death, or the death of the ego.[143]
- The root fear, not being mastered, manifests itself in a quantity of secondary fears, all experienced as separate fears: fear of others, fear of liberation, fear of the Master inside, and of the incarnated Master outside, and even, of course, fear of love, of the real love of the Master, since it is going to consume us, to transmute us into Love.
- Another way of saying the same thing is to consider the desire to retain desires as the main cause for our ambivalence and our resistance to change.

A symptom is the sign that something is going wrong. It is like an alarm signal and we can use it to make appropriate changes to get rid of the symptom and hence of the disease which causes it. In that case, we are going in the right direction towards the 'divine' use of the method, the Mission, and the Master. Psychology has nothing to add.

A symptom can also be the price that we pay for not changing anything. In that case, the symptom may stagnate or worsen, either in intensity or by generating other symptoms, since the underlying disease is still present.

Since the ego is identified with a particular state of consciousness, whereas the Master inside is pushing us to let

---

[142] Let us remember one of Babuji's pearls: "Purity is absence of contradiction."

[143] To transpose our fear of death in our spiritual path and goal is partly a delusion, because in reality only a change, in the sense of its refinement, is going to happen to the ego of the aspirant.

go of this particular way of experiencing reality, immediate acceptance and surrender[144] don't take place. This is because of conscious refusal or unconscious resistance.

The psychological consequences then of our ambivalence are as follows:

1. Flight and refusal mechanisms and, consequently, all kinds of negations and missed acts.[145]
2. Depression, either with outer manifestations such as weeping, or deeper and more silent symptoms where anxiety and sadness are replaced by the paralyzing feeling of emptiness.
3. Rebellion in all its forms, more or less acute, more or less overt, with more or less acting out.
4. Resignation, a rather stable state between depression and acceptance, a kind of fatalistic, passive renunciation.
5. Bargaining or negotiating, or the search for more or less 'honest' compromises between the two authorities, ego and Self.

Of course, these reactions do not always progress regularly from one to five. We may stick at one of them, according to our *samskaras* and character. They are present in various combinations. Inevitably they represent the different stages of the slow process of mourning, as eventually leading to acceptance. Let us be reminded here that

---

[144] Chariji has made the following distinction between these two concepts: "Acceptance is more restricted than surrender. It is of a person or of a situation. Whereas with surrender you have accepted all once and for all." (Informal conversation, Madras, May 1992).

[145] Missed acts, as we know, may be defined as behaviour which gives us a feeling of uneasiness because it is contradictory to our conscious intentions, as the result of unconscious influence(s) related to desires, to emotional reactions.

surrender would be the sole direct and immediate way to avoid this painful and long-lasting process of mourning, which usually takes months if not years to be completed. That is why this ambivalence, as an obstacle to our spiritual path, must be eradicated, for how can we with a 'split' reasonably hope to reach our Goal?

Although I am going to describe these misuses one after the other according to their targets, most of the time they are present simultaneously, and they may all be seen as related solely to the Master, who has, in fact, created the method and the Mission.

But before describing some of these misuses, let me express the hope that we look at them without feeling guilty, with a relaxed attitude, so as to avoid creating further impressions. Even if we recognize ourselves in some of the following situations, we should consider it as the expression of the tricks and cunning of the ego, and try to face it with a neutral attitude. Then they will simply disappear in a natural way. And in order to practise positive thinking, we commence each chapter or rubric with positively oriented quotations from our Master.

— 9 —

PROPER USE AND MISUSES OF THE METHOD

The Proper Use of the Method

Maybe the first thing we must understand is that in any case, the method, the Mission and the Master cannot be perverted. We are only perverting them ourselves because we are working, more or less knowingly, against our real Self, with a miserable compensatory pleasure of our egoistic wishes and desires. Renunciation of some of these egoistic pleasures may appear a bit drastic or daunting, but Chariji has been quite categorical regarding the necessity of practising with total dedication:

"This system demands exclusivity of practice, exclusive devotion for one Master, exclusive attention to yourself, exclusive love for the Master if and when it is possible, by His Grace. So it is a very, very exclusive system. We don't exclude, but we include ourselves totally within the system and, therefore, it is exclusive for us. We invite everyone without consideration of caste, colour, etc., but they must be willing to accept this one-pointed attention to spiritual practice of one system, devotion to one Master, love for one Master, acceptance of one goal."[146]

So maybe here we can also refer to the tenth maxim:

"At bedtime, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed, beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow the repetition of the same."

Babuji's commentary on maxim ten gives a solution to malpractice, and at the same time lets us avoid guilt feelings:

"When one has accepted Him as the Master, he can lay before Him every wrong committed unknowingly by him, or anything that might be

---

[146] *A Preceptor's Guide*, 1990, vol. III, p.89.

against the principle, in the capacity of one feeling guilty. In this way one impresses his own meekness upon the Master, who also begins to think that the wrong committed by the devotee is really pardonable since the feeling of supplication is present in his heart, for which he has presented it to the Master. There is such a tender softness in it as cannot be translated in words, and which reveals his feelings of true supplicancy. That means that the impediments present in him are removed and the weight thereof has been set aside. He thus assumes a state of absolute purity like that of the Divine currents which are absolutely free from *mala* (impurities), *vikshep* (unreal projections) and *avarana* (layers of grossness). Thus it goes to mean that we acquire this state of highest purity by establishing the relationship of devotion. It also brings forth a sense of simplicity which has been pointed out as the quintessence of Nature, and which, when developed, envelops him all over so that he begins to feel himself completely merged in it. The errors, which a devotee can never be completely free from, are then reduced to a mere lifeless lump. It is probable that blunders might have been committed before establishing this relationship, but then they go on diminishing by and by till finally their very existence begins to fade away. By the effect of the strong push applied by the force of the will they get transformed into repentance. Repentance is nothing but a jerk to the thought-waves which creates to a certain extent a state of vacuum within him. The flow from above then gets diverted towards it,... and the thing coming in helps us to wash off the previous effect. This may be taken as the true form of repentance.

"The feeling of humility, which may as well be expressed as a state of supplicancy, covers within it the condition of innocence. One who attains it has in a way attained all, though apparently it may not seem to be so. In that case the mistake no longer remains a mistake, since it has been washed off completely."[147]

As Chariji puts it, "We are trying to wrongly understand it[148] in a way convenient to our existence."[149]

Missed Acts

This term was introduced by Freud for describing the hiccups of memory, actions, words, due to a compromise

---

[147] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. I, p.236-237.

[148] He is speaking of the method.

[149] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VII, p.191.

between the conscious intention of the subject and his repressed feelings and desires.

If one has not yet recognized oneself performing such actions, at least one will have observed others doing them, maybe with a smile of compassion or with some irritation. They are obviously present when:

- we repeatedly can't get up in the morning at the expected time for our meditation;
- we systematically arrive five or fifteen minutes late for satsangh;
- we forget appointments with our preceptor for sittings;
- we regularly engage in 'interesting' or necessary activities at 9:00 p.m.;
- we lose the letter we wanted to post to our Master;
- we repeatedly register late or not at all for a seminar;
- we pronounce other words than the right ones as part of our nightly prayer. Other words have their own significance, and are usually not very spiritual in nature in the case of missed acts;
- we seldom or never have our diary when something relevant should be written in it, etc.

These missed acts are the signs that two opposing forces are at work. Missed acts are usually more ridiculous than dangerous, except when they turn into repetitive accidents.

So what to do when such missed acts happen to us, especially when they become repetitive? As we have seen, the amount of introspection required in the Sahaj Marg system must be optimal; it is being alert, which permits us to become aware of the nature of the underlying problem, and to take responsibility for it. When this is done, it is possible to

clean it, to give it to Him (for instance, through an individual sitting), to pray, to use positive suggestions and a determined will to bring about an appropriate change in us so as to restore our spiritual health. Then the inner conflict and the ambivalence which creates such 'missed acts' will naturally disappear.

Says Chari:

"I have had a host of people coming to me with the complaint that there is a blockage in their heart. Now there is one thing we must understand. There cannot possibly be anything inside me which some outer or external agency has put inside. We must have done it ourselves. Now, if it is not a physical thing, like bad food or bad water, it must be mental. So most of these blocks that we feel are mental blocks. So we have to clean and remove it. Then they say, 'Oh, it is so bad, I am not able to even meditate.' It is as if, what shall I say, as tragic, as comic, as a sick man saying, 'I am too sick to take medicine.' It has got to be done.

"And very often people come and say, 'Oh, you know, I haven't been able to meditate for one year, and I have no results.' This is even a bigger contradiction, that we expect results without doing anything. I mean, these are all the experiences of the last two, three days, and it is causing me much, what should I say, sorrow. That abhyasis don't meditate for two years, and then complain that they have no results. When you ask them why they don't meditate, they say they feel blocked. 'How did this block come?' 'Maybe I did something wrong.' 'Are you continuing to do it wrong now?' 'Yes, unfortunately.' [laughter] 'Why do you continue to do it?' 'Because I am not meditating.' [laughter] You see it goes round and round in circles.

"So what should we do about these things? After all, we are asked to meditate a maximum of one hour in the morning, fifteen, twenty minutes cleaning in the evening and ten minutes prayer at night. We don't have the time for this. Or we don't have the inclination for it. Even one abhyasi came and told me that every time he wanted to meditate he found something else to do... When you have something to do already, it only means the mind is not on meditation. So the only remedy was to advise him, 'Please do it.'

"So you see how ridiculous this situation is, that we create all these problems by misunderstanding, by misapplication of the will. Because there is one thing which Babuji always used to emphasize: that if you have the will power to apply at all, to anything, it must be applicable to anything that you want to do. So if you cannot do one thing and can do

another thing with the same will power, it only means that you want to do one thing while you don't want to do the other. The will power is not lacking and is not to be blamed.

"So you see, essentially the inability to meditate is not really an inability to meditate, but an unwillingness to meditate. Babuji has told so many abhyasis in my presence, he said, 'If my meditating for you could benefit, I would do the meditation for you also gladly.' But it is as silly as saying, 'If I could eat for you, I would eat for you.' You must eat. So please try to understand this: that whenever we say we can't meditate, we don't want to meditate. Because there is nothing in nature which can oppose a determined will. And what is necessary is to reassign our priorities, and do the meditation. If you do this, you will find there are no more questions, the path to the goal becomes smooth and progress is assured."[150]

Devitalizing the Method

Another way of resisting an effective system like Sahaj Marg consists in a kind of dissociation on the part of the abhyasi who gives only part of himself or herself to the practice. In other words, there is not full participation with the whole heart. The aspiration is removed, or more or less blocked, with the result that aspiration is no longer directed towards the spiritual Goal. But the spiritual activities may continue to take place, as if nothing special had occurred. As Chariji puts it:

"Most abhyasis don't make the method theirs, they just use it, like we use a car to go from a place to another."[151]

The result is usually one of the following:

- The practice is performed mechanically, sometimes with indifference, sometimes with bored feelings, or with a feeling of constraint (what we call pseudo-mutuality in family therapy, when people do things together by enforced loyalty.) As an example of such forms of devi-

---

[150] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.64-65

[151] Talk in Gulbarga, 23 March 1993.

talization, the diary is usually poorly documented in such periods, or not kept at all, and the attendance at satsangh and individual sittings decreases. On the occasion of Guru Purnima day, in July 1990 in Augerans, Chariji warned us about the danger of devitalizing the method:

> "I take this opportunity of conveying to you my Master's blessings on this very auspicious day. At the same time, I have to charge you all with the responsibility of making use of your spiritual opportunities in the right way and not go about Sahaj Marg in a merely mechanical way."

- The practice is performed as a ritual to which some emotional participation is conveyed, either with the feeling of being obliged to do it, as an obsession (for example to avoid anxiety, or even a catastrophe), or with pleasant feelings about the ritual itself, as found in some religious practices.[152]
- Over-investment is given by the intellect to the technical aspect of the practice and it is more or less isolated from the other aspects of the spiritual path, mainly from its devotional side.

Again in Bonascre in 1987, Chariji warned us about these last two ways of devitalizing our sadhana:

"When we systematize things too much, there is this problem that a thing loses its naturalness and becomes something separate from our life. I think that is why last night I told you about Babuji and his jokes, perhaps he wanted to make the subject not so serious, and to make it more human. This is a problem with systematization, rigid regularization, things like that. I have seen even in things like when you go to the office, you kiss your children and your wife, then it becomes a system which loses its naturalness. A kiss should be a kiss. But if you are absentmindedly wiping the butter off your lips and kissing your wife before going off to work, there's no fun any more in it. It becomes

---

[152] This last example is perhaps closer to the next category we have created, i.e., perverting or denaturing the method, in the sense that there is pleasure sought, and pleasure found in such an activity.

another ritual. So we have rituals at home, rituals in the work place — saying, '*Danke*' when you don't mean it for instance. You know, for instance, suppose the boss gives you a letter criticizing your work and you read it and want to kick him, but you say '*Danke schön*' — it's crazy, you see."

"So you see, these rituals from our childhood training progressively make us into automatons, until we lose all naturalness. And everything we make or do... as seen even when you go to an art exhibition, or to an art academy, people cannot look at a painting without the description in a catalogue. And then they must say, 'Ooo la la,' and 'Aha' and 'Oh, ho,' [laughter] — appreciate it. Sometimes it looks like a stupid thing done by some stupid fellow — very often, not sometimes — but we must appreciate in public, so not only do we lose naturalness, we lose honesty, also. 'What do you think of that painting?' 'Oh, it's wonderful.' And sometimes you end up by buying the funny thing and putting it in your house too — very expensive foolishness!

"So, if you study people around you today, there is no naturalness at all. Your holidays are unnatural; they are compulsive things. Somebody must go to the mountains; he cannot go to the lake, he cannot go to the forest, things like that. Where is the fun? The fun is in repeating the same thing over and over again in cycles. The man who goes to Biarritz must go always to Biarritz. Somebody goes to Tibet; he must always go to Tibet. So you see how unnatural, how cyclical, how monotonous even our holidays have become. So if that is the state of your holidays, what must be the state of your work? There is no joy in life. We must bring back that joy through bringing back naturalness.

"And if we come to Sahaj Marg because it's a natural way of development, and here also we fossilize everything by making it a system, a routine, then that big danger comes which Babuji was always expressing, that meditation becomes a mechanical, lifeless thing. Then how will we progress? So while we have to have rules and regulations, they must be like our clothes: loose, comfortable, and which you can throw off when necessary."[153]

Of course, such devitalizing phenomena may be either transient and superficial, during a period when our attention is being distracted from the Goal, or deeper and longer-

[153] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.74-76.

lasting, during a period of depression, due to different causes, at bio-psycho-spiritual levels.[154]

Diverting the Method (Denaturalization of the Method)

Some of these diversions or deviations are performed quite consciously, sometimes with the naïve, or arrogant belief that they are improving the method. These diversions are usually kept secret, maybe in order to avoid the risk of public refutation.

I am going to give here only a few examples and will avoid betraying confidentiality.

As far as the cleaning is concerned, for example, we can easily imagine a pleasurable habit being kept instead of cleaned. We will try to find a trick for holding on rather than letting go of such habits. The most common way is to review them during the daily cleaning, despite clear indications to the contrary given by Sahaj Marg literature and our spiritual guide. Concerning the rather newly reintroduced cleanings of point 1A and 1B, resistance is more intense, perhaps partly because, at least for point 1A, the tendency to be cleaned is more precisely labeled, since it is supposed to help us consider other abhyasis only as brothers and sisters.[155]

---

[154] Like biological levels as a reaction to a physical illness, or during a critical transition (like menopause); or psychological levels (as a reaction to a loss of a relationship, as the exhaustion phenomenon in a neurotic evolution, as a so-called endogenous type of an involutive origin, or of a mixed origin); or spiritual levels, because of the feeling of separateness from the Divine Source.

[155] Because of these confusing resistances, let us repeat here some explanations and comments of Chariji during the preceptors' seminar of Augerans (5 July 1989): "...The point A of the heart region is used for meditation. It is highly effective in correcting self-indulging tendencies... You must have the positive thought, meditating on this point, all in this world are my brothers

As far as the object(s) of meditation are concerned, even if one is thinking of the Goal for a few seconds, one may, as we all know, deviate very soon and for a long time to much more mundane fantasies. During meditation, the focus is sometimes consciously changed from the heart to the head, for example. Another way of diverting our meditation is to think that we meditate, rather than to meditate properly, which means forgetting ourselves, so that we are not even able to think any more, including about meditation itself.

The Sahaj Marg prayer and the nine o'clock prayer may also be diverted, by means of additional features borrowed from other *sadhanas* or religions, or previous practices, or by means of the removal of some elements in the prayer considered embarrassing enough to be ruled out (such as replacing or leaving out the words 'Master', or 'only God', etc.).

Even remembrance can be diverted and not simply missed. For example, we may justify certain actions by the fact that, during the action, we were thinking of Master, or 'being in the heart', etc.

The diary-keeping is very revealing of ambivalence, which maintains us in a half-hearted condition. Different reasons have already been mentioned by brother K.C. Narayana for avoiding this dialogue with our own Master, a dialogue which obliges us to stop acting for a while, and face ourselves with our Self in a more lucid and honest way,

---

and sisters... There is always a temptation to exclude something, you see, which for the moment is exciting... if a sister abhyasi is a victim of such tendencies, then she may be advised to follow the process with a slight modification in the process. She should think that all divine gifts are available to her, and that all men and women of the world think they are brothers and sisters and that her thought is one with theirs." (*A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.128 to 130)

especially in this privileged state which we are in after an individual or group sitting, sometimes resisting the supreme feeling of gratitude towards the Master. This gratitude might even bring us to risk a further opening of the heart to His work within us.

The ten maxims have been systematically commented upon by our brother K.C. Narayana,[150] in his booklet *Misuses Of the Methods* and used for self-evaluation in the Sahaj Marg Research Training Course. Everybody may take this opportunity for self-evaluation and see for himself or herself how we deal with them, or how we try to be clever with them when we don't simply ignore them.

A more serious danger is the blending or mixing of practices, despite Chari's warnings:

> "I find among our preceptors and abhyasis a fairly large section who want to do concurrently other systems which deal with energy. And we have two cases of considerable, shall I say, disruptive effect. People who indulged in forays into other domains which are normally forbidden, and came back smashed to bits. This is not an exaggeration. If you knew the people and the problems they faced, it was a very tragic instance of playing with energies which they could not handle, under teachers who were incapable of helping them when they were in trouble. It is like going to a swimming pool and you are sinking or drowning, and the fellow who is there who is supposed to look after you cannot help you."[156]

Usually, of course, the attraction to these other practices is the attachment to power. And power is what we fall back on when we don't have access to love, which dates back to our early childhood.

---

[150] A glossary on the commentary on the ten maxims of Sahaj Marg. Training Course in Sahaj Marg, January 1991, Sahaj Marg Research Institute, Hyderabad.

[156] *A Preceptor's Guide*, 1990, vol. III, p.88.

To a lesser degree, we can confuse ourselves by reading a variety of spiritual literature, so that we are inevitably in confrontation with contradictory statements. The result raises doubts, with guilt feelings and anxiety, sometimes resulting in a transient or prolonged stoppage of practice, as a psychological block.

Thus we can see how we are able to divert or to corrupt our practice, more or less subtly, more or less consciously. For example, if we repeatedly do our cleaning very late in the evening, so that we sleep more than we clean, or we spoil more than we clean, and we consent to speak about this 'curious' phenomenon only several weeks after it started: were we just not conscious of the problem? Were we consciously repressing it? Or didn't we consciously want to avoid listening to disturbing advice?

To my mind, the main problem with these forms of misuses of the method, which we have called diversion, is that they are actively invested in by the ego. Not only does this result in a kind of uneasiness or suffering (like for the missed acts or the devitalizing of the method), but also gives a certain amount of pleasure. This is because the ego keeps these diversions jealously for itself. Hence, our unwillingness to change.

As Chariji says:

"We don't change what we are proud of."[157]

Or again:

"Transmission is defined as *pranasya prana* — Life of life. Now that which was a mere mechanical 'I' before, becomes a real living 'I'. I think that is one of the reasons why, sometimes in abhyasis, we find more egoism after they have become abhyasis than they were before they started sadhana. It is my thought, you see, it need not be right, it is just an

[157] Informal conversation, Madras, January 1990.

idea that I have. Because when the sleeping 'I' becomes the waking 'I', one would assume more justifiably, that it is more aware of itself, and that is what egoism is — to be more aware of the self."[158]

Chariji would also explain the transient aggrandizement of our ego which we may experience during seminars, during which so much pranahuti is transmitted. If we are not absorbed in the high spiritual atmosphere, cleaning and letting go, we can be quickly caught by megalomaniac thoughts (to the point of being convinced of being a famous, or even a very famous, saint, or the Master ourselves). But then we have only sunk lower, according to the invertendo principle.

Of course, with such delusions of being a Master, if not a Special Personality, one is not astonished that such a person feels free to criticize or modify the method.

Forward Flight

In this instance, there is apparently nothing wrong in the practice itself, which is performed with much enthusiasm; the problem being precisely that there is so much zeal in it that the method is usually dissociated from some other essential parts of the system, such as having proper behaviour with brothers and sisters in the Mission, or properly performing our other duties at work or with family members, etc.

I can give here a personal example of this overzealous behaviour which was corrected by Chari. We were in Gayathri and Chariji announced to us that for the next day (which was to be a Sunday), there would be one satsangh at ten. I asked, "Only one satsangh to-morrow?" "Yes, why

[158] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VI, p.101.

not?" "Well, excuse me, it was spiritual greed." "No, no. There is not such a thing called spiritual greed. There is only greed."

— 10 —

PROPER USE AND MISUSES OF THE MISSION

Amongst the three Ms, the Mission appears to be the inevitable poor relation, the most difficult to invest with love, simply because it is made up of ourselves, imperfect abhyasis. As a result of our, as yet undivinised, tendencies, we inevitably experience frustrations and deceptions.

At the same time, and for the same reasons, the Mission offers us the most honest trial. Here we cannot cheat ourselves, providing we accept that each time we react emotionally to something or to somebody, a tendency of ours is stimulated, that can be worked upon both psychologically and spiritually.

An active involvement in the Mission is often avoided, and various reasons are given to justify such behaviour, which is only superficially comfortable.

We have no choice but to deal with our underlying motivations for avoiding appropriate involvement in the Mission.

The Proper Use of the Mission

It is easy to describe how we ought to behave in the Mission, utilizing its structures and functions. If we applied the ten maxims, no problem could exist; and if we were in constant remembrance, all would be harmonious in the Mission. As Chariji has reminded us so often, in spirituality we mainly have to give. We may give some of our time as

volunteers working in the Mission.[159] It is well documented in Sahaj Marg literature, and Chariji has said we should "do our job, not more, not less," so that our interactions in the Mission can take place in a harmonious atmosphere, where abhyasis are at least truly tolerating each other.[160] Chariji has shown his own true tolerance towards us and our difficulties concerning acting, interacting, and working together in the Mission when he said, "It is acceptable when friction of the ego between abhyasis doesn't block the work in a centre or in a country."[161]

Harmony is possible in a healthy family, or an association like ours, when co-operation is practised and people are mature enough to communicate directly each time they have slipped back into rivalry and want to go beyond it. Once we are stuck in a relationship dominated by rivalry, where two or more persons want to do the same thing first, and get the honours for themselves alone, we should be able to look at our own way of communicating and see where things are going wrong. This is a necessary step in changing the relationship back to a complementary one, in which ideally no-one bothers anyone else, and hence saves time and energy, and avoids transforming the Mission into a kind of boxing ring.[162]

---

[159] One of the next chapters will deal with working and serving. For the moment, let us just say that if we are encouraged to work for our Master's Mission, besides the direct spiritual benefits and blessings we may receive, it is also a way of preventing us from involvement in all the unnecessary interactions we are so prone to engage in with others, or within ourselves, like small talk, which so easily becomes noxious by degenerating into criticism and judgment.

[160] By truly tolerating each other, we refer to a natural tolerance instead of an enforced or pseudo-tolerance due to the repression of our violence.

[161] Informal conversation, Madras, January, 1990.

[162] Of course, the reference is made here to the famous statement of Lalaji's: "The world is the place where we take revenge" (*Truth Eternal*).

We know that the difficulties of maintaining harmony in the Mission exist everywhere. Only the style and the modalities of the difficulties vary from one centre to another, according to different habits and different cultures.

As Chariji said in Bangalore on the twenty-sixth of August, 1990:

"If you have but the courage to face yourself, you will find, without exception, that we are standing in the way of others. There's no exception to this, you see. Perhaps the only exception is the Master."

Chariji has been seen to handle some very delicate situations (some of these I was involved in myself). One cannot describe his actions in terms of psychology in any particular case, since his favoured tool is Divine Love. But he also has to work at the level of the problem, as we saw earlier,[163] so that it is possible for everyone to see the effects of this Love at the interactional, psychological, or even biological level.

The Misuses of the Mission

From what I have been able to observe so far, I would say that the difficulties in relationships among Mission members are seldom apparent, open, or verbalized. Usually, there is a more or less effective attempt to cover the rivalry, the jealousy, the power struggles by a layer of hypocrisy and repression, wrongly called moderation or tolerance, when there is no genuine respect or even love. It should not be a question of whether open violence and intolerance, or covert forms of these, is worse. What is important is that we learn to solve these problems. We often have an unhealthy attachment or repulsion to some of the members of the Mission. The

---

[163] According to what we called the third principle of a Sahaj Marg, or spiritualized, psychology.

main result of this neurotic or perverted emotional displacement is that we have friends (loved brothers and sisters) and enemies, instead of having only one Friend, in the form of our Master.

Some passages of a talk Chariji gave in New Jersey in September of 1986 clarify this point:

"Now, what are friends for? They are in some way for indulgence. As Fred said, it need not be wild. You see, that is an extreme form of indulgence. But if you consider this point carefully, you will find there can be no friendship without indulgence of some sort. With a guru, there is no indulgence. Because when we go and we have spare time and we want to do something with a friend, he laughs, we laugh — nothing useful. I mean, generally speaking, nothing useful ever happens. It is to pass time in an environment where we don't incur much displeasure, or opposition to our views, and therefore, all is *bonhomie*. 'Hail, fellow, well met.' Slapping on the back, that sort of affair. That is why we have friends, and non-friends... They contribute nothing to our welfare.

But a friend by definition is one who is willing to give his life for me. Nothing short of that. Therefore, in the Sufi tradition, the Guru alone is called a friend, because he literally gives his life for us. When my Master transmitted to us, and we called it pranahuti, which means offering of His life into our life, he was giving his life to us every moment of his existence. Therefore, what is this lack of friendship that we feel? Is it not enough that I have one friend like that? Can there be two? It is not possible. Therefore, if I am to have a friendship, and a friend to fulfill that need for that relationship, it can be and should be only the Master. And if having the Master we still feel that we have no friendship, it only means we are not appreciative of what He is doing for us, what He is giving to us. Therefore the need is there to increase our sensitivity, and also to correct our understanding of what friendship means and who a friend is...

"At the highest level alone, friendship can survive and sustain us. At lower levels it ceases to be friendship, and the association is only one of mutual gratification. I repeat, it need not be wild, even the need to spend one's spare time is a gratification."[164]

---

[164] *The Fruit of the Tree*, p.115-117.

Perverting Tendencies in the Mission

As we have already mentioned, we can establish preferential relationships with some abhyasis whom we treat in a special affectionate manner, with the result of creating a kind of elite, which means also creating a barrier between the ones who are within, and those who are without. We are not speaking here of a distinction between so-called abhyasis and so-called non-abhyasis, but also of the creation of sub-groups within Shri Ram Chandra Mission, with special loyalties prevailing among their 'privileged' members. As a consequence, a real brotherhood can't take place as it is replaced by factions who are sympathizing amongst themselves, and more or less quarreling with other factions. Chariji has warned us of this danger on several occasions, three of which are quoted below:

"Actually, they are two different subjects. One is dealing with interpersonal relationships between human beings, which Fred dealt with quite exhaustively. What should be our relationship with other human beings? And it is Master's grace that he understood intuitively the exclusive, or shall we say, the separateness that friendship breeds, and which, in that sense is very much like religion. It divides. One is a friend, one is not a friend; not necessarily an enemy. So there are friends, there are neutral or grey zones of relationship, and there is the positive enmity between others."[165]

"I think in a spiritualist's existence, sympathy does not exist. It may come as a shock to some of you, but this is my feeling. 'What do you mean Chari, no sympathy? Should I not have sympathy for my cousin, my wife, my sister, my brother, for suffering humanity?' All tall talk, big terms, because most of the vicarious suffering we suffer is by putting ourselves in the place of one who suffers, and imagining what we would suffer were we in that position. So it is a totally personalized suffering. There is no real need to suffer, therefore it is unreal. If you see somebody's arm being cut off, and you wince with pain... it is for you to prove to yourself that what I'm saying is perhaps true.

---

[165] *The Fruit of the Tree*, p.113.

"Similarly enjoyment, you see, we see somebody eating an ice cream — our tongue waters. Well, that is a sort of a Pavlov reflex, you see, but then you want to buy one and eat it. So, much of our life is governed by what we see, and what we smell, and what we hear, and what we touch, and what we taste. Therefore, Hindu yogic science says, 'Master the senses first.'...

"We have been rightly criticized by some people as using psychological techniques in Sahaj Marg, especially in the West. In the West, perhaps some of it is necessary at this moment in time, you see, because people expect to be spoken to, sympathized with, a shoulder to weep upon, all this, you know, the usual social conventions of an Occidental society, mistaking such sympathy for true affection, true love, true interest, true commitment. It is none of them, excuse me for saying it, but they are transitory interests. 'Oh, darling, what a shame that you are suffering so much.' And the two weep together. I don't know why two should weep together, for even one perhaps should not weep."[166]

"I am a little disappointed with this talk of new abhyasis. How are they new? In what way are they new? [laughter] Suppose a child is born now into my family. He is part of my family. We don't make a fuss and say, 'Oh! A new addition to my family; this is a new child in the family.' It is something we have been waiting for, expecting with a great deal of expectation, love, anxiety. And when the child is born, and the mother and the child are safe and happy and healthy, we celebrate. And some of us may also thank God that everything is well. This should be our attitude to new abhyasis.

"So please bear that in mind for the future. For me there are no new abhyasis. Either we are all old abhyasis or we are all new abhyasis, there is no difference. It's like traveling in a train and people are coming into the train at each station. We don't make a song and dance and say, 'New passengers have arrived.' [laughter] So, why should we do it here? And in some way, it creates a distance between them and us. You make them feel as if they are guilty in coming late to Sahaj Marg. And, more troublesome, we have a little ego that we are older than them in Sahaj Marg, as if we know better. Just because we are longer in something doesn't mean we know more about it than somebody else."[167]

How often a conversation between two abhyasis disagreeing about a particular point concerning the method, the Master or the Mission, will bring up, "How long have

---

[166] *Proceedings of the Preceptors' Seminar*, 1991, Pune, India, p.10-11.

[167] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.31.

you been in the Mission?", usually from the one who has more seniority. As Chariji said in a talk (Lucknow, November 1992):

"Here *[in Sahaj Marg]*[168] there is no progress we measure by the passing of time."

So both rivalry and buddy-buddy relationships constitute the antithesis of a spiritual brotherhood, which should be devoid of what we have called transference, feelings derived from childhood relationships. Manifestations of such tendencies can descend to great depths, especially when preceptors are affected by these corrupting tendencies. Unfortunately this is not rare, because preceptors are often treated as figures of authority, so they are especially vulnerable to a flattering of their egos.[169]

As a result, we sadly find a centre may have a cliché of friends, actively or passively disapproved by others, who are *ipso facto* also caught in another cliché, in a general atmosphere combining seduction and rivalry, when it is not power struggle. A sensitive, first-time visitor to the centre is going to feel a kind of uneasiness, an atmosphere of tension and/or agitation, which may even affect the general mood of the group before and after satsangh.

The after-satsangh atmosphere is, for me, a very good barometer of the general level of functioning in a centre or an assembly, because in this special transitory state in which we

---

[168] Added by us.

[169] Since we are going to deal separately with the misuses of preceptors in the next chapter, we will not discuss this topic further here. This is, of course, an artificial way of separating psychological realities, which are in fact closely interconnected, and functioning according to a circular model (or helical model) rather than a linear one, where A is supposed to be the cause of B, or influences B, which influences C, etc., but where interaction is always possible, as explained earlier (see chapter 3, part one).

are floating when meditation is over, we are still very open in our hearts. As a result, if the perverting tendencies are strong, the ego uses the divine energy itself to reinforce them and act them out rapidly, despite the cleaning that has just taken place. Consequently, as soon as one person has emitted a signal in relationship to these tendencies, the old game starts all over again very intensely, because of the strong effect it has on the more opened heart.

The perverting interactions are generally produced, either in a competitive atmosphere, which may lead to confrontations (as the result of an escalation process), or in a seductive manner, that may also degenerate into humorous, or seductive types of interaction. So far, this second way seems to me more frequent during the pre-satsangh phase, most of the time combined with some excitement, that may even lead to giggles (which do not always stop after meditation has started).

It is very difficult and probably not effective to intervene on the spot, because of the risk of increasing the excitement, the small talk, the jokes, or the giggles. Even to make a remark later on is risky, because the persons usually engaged in such defensive behaviour are rather attached to such pleasure-producing activity, so that they usually answer with what are called rationalizations in psychology, such as, "This is not dangerous because I do it consciously, because I am not fooled by this game."[170]

So one can see how difficult it is, and how long it would take to convince a person to look at such behaviour with realism. Moreover, the modeling or contaminating effect on others is usually not taken into consideration. It always

---

[170] Of course, in reality (or at the spiritual level), it is in fact much more rather than less dangerous to do it consciously!

makes me think of a very disturbed family with a schizophrenic member one of my colleagues was treating, whose father once said very quietly, "Incest is not a problem, providing it is kept in the family."

There is another field of activity in any centre of the Mission where our perverting tendencies may be stimulated, namely the different activities when 'working together' in the Mission. As a centre develops and expands, this field of co-operation is revealed at different levels. These tensions come most clearly to light when a seminar has to be organized, a meditation hall managed, an ashram, or a whole country, etc. In fact, these tests are very revealing of our degree of evolution, both as individuals and as living groups:

- how flexible or rigid we are when trying to obtain a consensus;
- how open or closed or emotionally reactive we are to opinions, or even information and facts reported by others than ourselves;
- how honest and lucid we are when we have made an error;
- how humble or how boastful we are when we have had some success in performing a particular task;
- how moderate and quiet or violent and/or agitated we are when rapid decisions and adaptation to critical situations are needed;
- how upright and able to truly negotiate, or how prone we are to be the winner at almost any cost through dishonest bargaining;
- how rapid and efficient or slow and stagnant we are when co-operation is requested for a particular work, or for just passing along information amongst ourselves.

According to this statement of Chari's:

"If I refuse to face you in my inside, I have to face you outside."

I remember this sentence each time I am not tolerant enough, each time I am not in a state of sufficient internal receptivity, the problem will be actualized in my relationships, with others who are mainly abhyasis of the Mission. In other words, if my internal space or vacuum is not sufficiently developed, I am going to become resonant with the behaviour of others. Such behaviour will act as trigger for creating conflicts, and even escalation (if the confrontations are direct), or for creating coalitions and rumours if the communication is indirect, in an atmosphere of plot or intrigue. The results of such malfunctioning, especially the second type (because of its 'non-perceptibility' and its pleasure-provoking quality), are very pernicious for a centre if they persist, leading sooner or later to a 'demobilization phenomenon', which is described later under Devitalization of the Mission.

Before this demobilization stage, one may be shocked, one may feel rebellion, and if one is able to delay one's own reaction, one may think about what should be said to avoid the pitfall of saying too little or too much, when we are facing such difficult situations which trigger our emotional reactions, for example anger or jealousy.

We often say too much, either directly to the person we judge, or to an ally when we don't have the courage to face the 'brother' or 'sister' with whom we are in conflict. We then use different justifications for acting that way, complicating the thing further and making it last longer.

I know, for instance, that I have addressed abhyasis rather abruptly in telling them something which was in fact true, but which should have been said in a more acceptable

way. In other words, I was kidding myself that I was permitted to speak bluntly to abhyasis "because as such they would no longer need to be treated tactfully according to their spiritual growth." Again, I learned some lessons from our living spiritual guide and his ability to give the necessary information to a troublemaker with a sufficient amount of humour as, for example, during an informal conversation,[171] when Chariji was unnecessarily interrupted in his attempt to explain an important spiritual point: "You have the delicious Arabic habit of chasing the donkey in the desert!" Then he continued his explanation after telling everyone, including the occasional troublemaker; all laughed.

When we accuse others we should be cautious because of what is known in psychology as the projection mechanism. This common strategy goes as follows: I feel guilty for having hurt my brother or my sister, but in order to mask this disagreeable feeling I use some information given by him or her to accuse him or her to protect myself against the accusation I expect because of my own misbehaviour. This is a poisonous way of communicating, because the other person will feel unjustly accused and will have difficulties in refraining himself from taking revenge in one way or another... so that the game has a tendency to continue endlessly, with the danger of progressively closing our hearts. As a result, division is maintained between two abhyasis, between sub-groups in a centre, between centres, between nations, and between abhyasis and so-called non-abhyasis, whom I suggest calling, if it is at all necessary to discriminate, 'not-yet-official abhyasis'.

This latter tendency to protect ourselves against an exterior enemy is dangerous, leading to sectarianism. Our

---

[171] Madras, May 1991.

Mission is consequently not completely devoid of it, despite the clear position of our successive Masters, starting with the following statement of Lalaji, reported by Babuji in his autobiography:[172]

"Master told me the following things to be observed during bhandara (spiritual congregation):

- Everyone should respect others.
- The question of high and low should not arise.
- Nothing should be done which is disliked by others.
- One should desist from uncultured behaviour.
- One should keep his mind steady.
- One should not indulge in unnecessary argumentation and useless criticism. One should ask only relevant questions.
- The real purpose of a Bhandara is to refresh our memory of the one whose festival is being observed.
- There should be no differentiation between the gurus or disciples of other institutions and one's own."

Regarding sectarianism in the Mission, in his address to the Canadian Board of Directors Meeting on the sixteenth of August, 1987, Chariji said:

"...When space was open there was no fear, there was no separation. The moment we enclose it and partition it into rooms, there is not only possessiveness but, associated with it, unfriendliness, fear.

"My anxiety is that this should not happen in the Mission, because we often hear of the US Mission, the Canadian Mission, the Indian Mission — because they happen to be legally separate entities in their respective countries. Well, that is for purposes of fulfilling the law and for fulfilling the purposes of the Mission. But it is vitally important that the members are not separated by these legal separations. We have enough problems of

---

[172] *Autobiography of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.17-18.

separation by language, by culture, by religion, by tradition, without allowing the members of the Mission to be separated by saying, 'I am Canadian Mission, you are US Mission, you are French Mission,' and things like that. So, this is the problem of building a house. We get safety and security at the cost of unity and harmony.

"Now, this is a danger for us. We have seen this in the past in the Mission here in Canada, when even some people from other countries claimed part of this country, because the people here spoke the same language as the people in that country. Now that is almost tantamount to an invasion on the basis of language. And we should not allow such considerations to divide us who are members of this Mission. We are talking of integration, oneness, brotherhood. Not only a Canadian brotherhood in which the French remain French, the English-speaking Canadians remain English, but humanity everywhere must be considered as one unit for us. So let us remember that while we have, as Don said, secular problems, the secular problems should not split the spiritual oneness into disharmony and disunity. So that means, in a sense, we must build a house without walls. How that is possible, you have to find out.

"I am compelled to make these remarks because when we started thinking of an ashram in Europe, you all know how many problems arose because of that. Immediately each nationality wanted it in its own country. So this sort of problem should not be allowed to creep into the Mission at all. I would rather not have ashrams and sit on the public highway and meditate if possible, rather than have these things which divide us. So please bear in mind, all of you from various countries, different languages, different cultural backgrounds, that in Sahaj Marg we are dedicated to the sole purpose of treating human beings as human beings and helping them to grow into divinised human beings. With this objective nothing should interfere and nothing shall interfere.

"So please forget all differences of linguistic and other considerations, and try to live up to what we are talking about all the time — that Sahaj Marg welcomes all, irrespective of race, caste, colour, sex. It's not enough that the President and the preceptors say this. They must feel it in their hearts, and those who come to us should feel it in their hearts, too, a reflection of this feeling. And I would like to dream of a day — well, just for fun, if somebody were to say, 'All French-speaking abhyasis, put up their hands,' no hand would rise. Because all of us would be immersed in the consciousness of the Master's remembrance and we should have forgotten our nationalities, our language, even our existence. That is the true test of our spiritual growth and development. That is the purpose for which this Mission has been created by my Master. That is the purpose for which the President, the Joint Secretary, Secretary, all the office bearers, the preceptors, have to work. And that is what all of you as abhyasis should seek — seek and find, seek and find and retain. I say

'retain' because very often we come into the Mission with very grand and noble ideas, but soon, like atomic degradation, there seems to be some degradation in our ideals, too. And you find there is a gravitation back towards your original levels of existence. The Canadian becomes Canadian, the American becomes American. Then the Canadian group splits into two, the French and the English Canadians. It is almost like an amoeba which is dividing itself into several pieces. We should not duplicate the process of nature in this vital fact. There, integration is for subsequent fission and division. Cells divide. You know, every cell divides into two. Here we should integrate to retain that integration. And until the whole of humanity becomes like one person, we cannot consider the goals of Sahaj Marg, or the dreams of my Master, to have been realised."[173]

So external or internal sectarianisms have the same source, i.e., prejudice. This leads us back to the recommendations of Lalaji, and more specifically to the sixth one: "One should not indulge in unnecessary argumentation and useless criticism." We all know that criticism is a very pernicious habit, which can have very noxious effects and easily be blown up to poisonous rumours. Lalaji has been very clear concerning this topic, as reported by Babuji in his diary, 2 January 1948:

"It is sinful to hear ugly talk. If such talk, which ought not to be heard, goes on in a congregation, it is better to quit that place."[174]

The reason for it is evident: if we stay, we get contaminated, rather sooner than later. In Château-d'Oex, October 1987, Chariji gave another reason for avoiding criticism:

"We cannot criticize what we know. We can only describe it. So I make this distinction between description of a thing which we know and criticism of a thing which we have not known. And therefore, we can automatically conclude that most critics haven't known what they are trying to criticize. And therefore, in one of my talks in Vienna I said, 'I am a critic of critics.' Because, again, there it was the same story that I didn't know the critic but I knew his criticism. So this is the second

---

[173] *Heart to Heart*, vol. I, p.164-167.

[174] *Autobiography of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.109.

degree of criticism. Criticizing one whom you do not know, who has criticized something which he has not known. And you know, this can go on degree after degree. And this is generally what happens in life."[175]

Further, Chariji has said,

"It is too easy to criticize. Every fool can criticize, I mean only fools criticize. Wise men don't criticize."[176]

As we know, problems of communication are statistically increased in quantity and intensity when people are functioning at a high emotional level. On the contrary, difficulties of communication are reduced, if not suppressed when the emotional level is low, or absent, as it should be in a spiritual association.

Most communication problems are common, and each of us can recognize ourselves either as the author, or the victim in this list:

Devitalizing the Communication

This phenomenon is present each time one does not put the heart into what is said, but only the intellect. As a result, the information is given coldly or in a complicated way, so that those concerned with the information forget it. I have done this myself when announcing to brothers and sisters various details about the organization of our Mission.

Perverting the Communication

- Criticizing and judging certainly constitute a huge waste of energy (received through means of divine love, i.e., transmission), which could be used for our spiritual well-being.

---

[175] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.323-324.

[176] Informal conversation, Madras, 12 September 1992.

- Advising has been seen as an example of a perverting tendency, when we are not sincerely taking into consideration the real needs of others. In that case there is no real understanding of what the other was trying to say.

- Rigidity, laziness, or a lack of openness cause us to jump to conclusions, generalize, use stereotyped formal language, or set language. This is particularly unfortunate between preceptors and abhyasis, when the latter will not feel understood, and complain at the lack of humanness on the part of their preceptor.

- Abusive generalization is not a rare phenomenon. This is when what I think or I feel is considered by my ego as the 'normal' reference, so that I am quite astonished when someone cannot accept my views.

- Advice and messages can also be perverted or distorted even when they emanate from the Master Himself, as noticed here by Chari:

  "My Master, Revered Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, the founder President of the Mission, was always trying to delicately hint to the abhyasis, that while a message may be given on an important occasion, its relevance, or its applicability, was something universal and the meaning of the message had to be understood with one's heart and put into daily practice, if it were to have any benefit in the abhyasis' growth in the spiritual sphere. This advice my Master always hinted at, but I am not sure how many were even willing to listen to this advice, because all that most abhyasis were interested in was to have the Master's message in print 'for posterity', as was often said."[177]

- To keep information for oneself which could be useful for our brothers and sisters is a frequent problem of communication. As an example of such problems, on several occasions time and energy were wasted by my wife or

---

[177] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VII, p.209.

myself, as the secretary of our Mission for Switzerland, because of this retention, since as a consequence, we could not convey useful information in time for the benefit of other brothers and sisters.

- A common habit among people involved in spirituality consists in transmitting administrative types of information in a rather vague manner, not necessarily to the right persons, with the excuse that the necessary information will find its way, "if it is the will of the Master." But this excuse usually masks carelessness and laziness. For example, if an abhyasi somewhere quickly needs a particular object for the Mission, which can only be found downtown in a shop, and I happen to be ambivalent towards the request itself, towards this particular abhyasi who is passing on the information, or towards the effort of taking two or three hours to get and maybe also pay for this particular object, the result will be poor. And so I cover up the secondary rationalization of pretending to believe that among spiritualized persons like abhyasis, precise and accurate communication is superfluous.

The following passages from Chari's speeches given in New Jersey in September 1986 about brotherhood and friendship have been very revealing to many of us, enriching and enlarging our understanding of these delicate points:

"I would like to say a few words on the idea of brotherhood, not to educate you or give you a lecture, but because I find that a wrong understanding of this idea of brotherhood has broken up potential associations.

"The first idea is that a brotherhood is a small group in a bigger humanity. This is not what Master intended. A group is a group. It is not a group of brothers and sisters. It need not be a group of brothers and sisters. Because if we think like that, then we are isolating ourselves from the rest of humanity and, in some way, excluding the rest of humanity from coming to us.

"It is like the example I gave the other day that, if you shut yourself in a room and close the door, you are not only locking yourself in but you are locking everybody else out. You don't have two doors, one for locking others out and one for locking yourself in. Just one door is enough. So similarly, we have these mental doors, you know, that we are Sahaj Marg, or we are Rotarians, or we are Catholics, and in trying to preserve a group identity for ourselves, we create the other, who is not us.

"That is the first dangerous idea that we have, that we are a group of brothers and sisters. I think what my Master wanted was that all of humanity should be brothers and sisters, not a group, even when we cannot be a group. That is why He was always talking of Universal Love and things like that.

"I remember once, and I have referred to this earlier, that a preceptor asked Babuji in Copenhagen, 'How to make others into abhyasis?' Babuji answered, 'You are a preceptor, and you should not have this idea that he is not an abhyasi or she is not an abhyasi. Because the power of the Master is in you, and if you make this thought that he is not an abhyasi, he will never become an abhyasi. He or she may think she is not an abhyasi, but why do you think so?' Therefore, when we adopt a group identity, and a group structure, and we are one, you see, we are making the same mistake that, if you will pardon me for saying, Christianity makes, every other religion makes...

"The second dangerous idea is that within a group, there should always be harmony, in the sense that you seem to mean it. That is, everybody agreeing with everybody else. Such a life would be a very tame and tedious affair. There should be no mutual recrimination, no annoyance, no anger, but certainly, there should be freedom to differ. Everything in nature works that way. You have what you call your solar system. A sun with a number of planets rotating around it. The sun has its own independent motion. It rotates on its own axis, and it is wandering through space within the galaxy. And even though the planets are moving as a family round it; they all have their independence; they all rotate around their own axis; they all rotate around the sun."[178]

How to Avoid These Human Pitfalls?

Direct Verbal Interventions

Although this is not the subtlest way of communicating, one can hardly avoid it, especially when it is a matter of

---

[178] *The Fruit of the Tree*, p.97-99.

urgency. It requires some boldness and tenacity in order for problems to be recognized as such, so that they can be cured and even prevented. Chari, August 1990 in Augerans:

"I wish more people would say what they feel, openly, frankly, either in person to me, or in public, or in letters. The time to stop a house from burning down is when you see the fire beginning, not after it has burned down. Anybody who has the interest of the Mission at heart should have the courage to stand up and tell these things before the trouble begins."

Silent Spiritual Tools

- Remembrance of the Master should be present, especially when we assume the freedom to intervene verbally.
- Positive suggestions, as subtle as possible, may be practised as often as necessary, directed towards one or several persons, including oneself, with a view to better functioning in the Mission. There is no risk of harming anyone if one suggests harmony, real brotherhood, faith, devotion, moderation, openness, tolerance, or respect for oneself and for others.
- Prayer: if the problem is important enough to require His direct attention, prayer, as subtle as possible, is the method to be selected.

General Attitude

"We assume we are already brothers and sisters, and not working to establish a brotherhood,"[179] says Chari. Sincerity is a must and an elementary basis for building this necessary brotherhood. "The proof of our sincerity is our attitude

[179] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.35.

towards others."[180] And again: "The only secure relationship is of the brother and sister."[181]

"We must remain at the spiritual level, like, you know, we travel together in a plane. You have a Canadian passport, I have an Indian passport, somebody has a British passport, somebody has a German passport; it doesn't prevent us from traveling together on the same plane."[182]

"So this is a requirement of moral law, moral living, that for our own evolution, we divest ourselves progressively, throw off, remove all that tends to hold us down, whether it is gold or friendship. And, as Fred rightly said, the only thing that is all-pervasive and natural is a brotherhood. Therefore, spirituality accepts not only the need for brotherhood, but for each individual abhyasi to develop this sense of brotherhood. As I have often said, a wife can be divorced, or a husband can be divorced, but you cannot divorce a brother or a sister. Because it's a natural relationship, originally subsisting in a family.

"When we see the unity of human existence, we see that all are brothers and sisters. When, by Master's blessings, we see the unity of all life, then that brotherhood extends to embrace within itself even animals, birds, minerals, anything. I am saying this so that we should not imagine that our brotherhood stops with human beings alone. It has to come to a stage where our heart expands to embrace all existence. That is true brotherhood, real brotherhood."[183]

Let us conclude with a passage showing the relationship between the development of brotherhood in this world, and its correspondence in the inner world, as Babuji puts it in the sixth maxim.

"The development of the feeling of universal brotherhood means the breaking up of the individual network that separated one from the other, and the closer adherence to the tie of fraternity. It will naturally lead to mutual association and greater attachment, and our dealing with one another will be moulded accordingly, ensuring greater peace and contentment to everyone. How nice would it be to have it thus! Having accomplished this we proceed on further, which also becomes easier to

---

[180] Gulbarga, 23 March 1993.

[181] *Heart to Heart*, vol. I, p.279.

[182] Ibid, p.167.

[183] *The Fruit of the Tree*, p.123.

realise. This world is in fact a reflection of the other world. When this one is moulded properly, its effect extends on to the other world whose reflection it is, and that, too, will begin to get purified. This will greatly smoothen our task and help us further in the attainment of the Ideal. Our success here will lead to our success there. By the world that casts the reflection I mean the *brahmand* or the astral world where everything happens in an astral form prior to its coming to this world in material shape. In *brahmand* it comes down similarly from the next higher region, and there from the still higher, and so on. Thus by proper modification of this last layer the effect is carried to each of the higher layers successively up to the very highest one which begins to get purified in the easiest and most natural way." [184]

Devitalization of the Mission

Now for the 'demobilization phenomenon'. As far as I have been able to observe, this tendency appears to involve the following mechanisms:

- Either as a side effect of quarrels amongst some members of the Mission: a poisonous atmosphere tends to affect the not-directly-and-not-actively-involved-members, i.e., as a depressing effect, which results in a feeling of indifference or sometimes disgust.
- Or as a direct contaminating effect by previously enthusiastic, active leaders in a centre, frequently preceptors, who are going through a difficult period of demobilization themselves.

The concrete effects of this demobilization phenomenon are easy to imagine or to observe:

- Abhyasis don't behave like spiritual brothers and sisters when they meet; instead of actively and openly interacting between themselves, they rather avoid communication, and leave immediately after satsangh.

---

[184] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. I, p.228.

- There is difficulty in finding volunteers for the various tasks in the Mission, especially for the new tasks, and the routine activities are performed more slowly or even stopped.
- If the malaise persists and worsens, the participation in satsangh itself decreases, and probably contributes to the dropout of some recently introduced abhyasis.

All of these symptoms have another consequence, i.e., the centre is not able to play its role of 'spiritual magnet' for seeking souls. Such a centre stagnates and does not contribute to the good reputation of the Mission, the method, or the Master.

Having described the disease, there arises the question of treatment or measures to prevent such a sad situation. The same spiritual tools as described in the preceding section also apply here, mainly positive suggestion and prayer.

"My Master, Babuji Maharaj used to say that when a fire is lit it sort of burns down, and then somebody has to poke it and blow it up again. So that is what we achieve at these meetings, because inevitably there is some sort of dying down of interest, of enthusiasm, with the passage of time. One only hopes that such meetings could be possible even more frequently, but I don't see why the stimulation should not come from within your own groups. Perhaps the secret is, that like you have a metal poker to poke up a fire which is wood and a lot of ash, here also you need something which will not itself burn out during the process. I am eagerly awaiting the development of such pokers in our local groups because I know the raw material is there. In most cases such persons are too shy to put themselves forward and we have this funny idea of humility and things like that. But in that context we must remember what my Master always said: 'Humility in one's inner attitude, forcefulness in one's work, and faith in the Master.' So these three should be combined in our attitude towards our work."[185]

---

[185] *Heart to Heart*, vol. I, p.144-145.

Ambivalence Towards the Mission Itself

Instead of feeling and acting out our fears and ambivalence among ourselves, intellectualizing, we can project them onto the Mission. In that case, the very concept of Mission or the choice of the name Babuji Marahaj gave to it can be questioned, as reported in the following passage from Chari:

"In 1972, there was a lot of, you know, *brou-ha-ha* about Mission. Why Mission? It smacks of Christianity. So if you call something by a name which you do not like, you do not like the thing itself. So Babuji said, 'What can I do?' Of course, he had his own inimitable way of answering questions.

"Babuji said, 'Look, I am telling you, I also don't like it. But I am called Ram Chandra. I must be Ram Chandra in Germany, Ram Chandra in Finland, Ram Chandra in India. Suppose I have a different name in each country, how will you recognize me? So, since it has been given this name in honour of my Master, I cannot now change it.' You know, he just very adroitly sidetracked the issue. Then everybody had to agree.

"But we have these deep-seated prejudices against things and names and places which are totally irrational. I mean, prejudice *per se* is irrational. So whenever we talk of the Mission, people say, 'What is this Mission, another Christianity?'"[186]

When the prejudice is not directed against the very concept of Mission, it can be directed against some of its attributes, like ashrams in the Mission, money in the Mission, or hierarchy in the Mission. As a response to such ambivalence and criticism concerning the first two, i.e., money and ashram, Chariji says:

"You know, they are not only called 'mission', they have the prayer, they have a Master, and you must pay money. Now this money is a big bugbear. We are willing to pay for baguettes and for all the silly things — Asterix, thirty-six francs, it doesn't bother us. But when we talk of an ashram and the need to have an ashram, not for the Master, the Master is not going to take away your ashram from here, you see, or from wherever it may be. Even the Shahjahanpur ashram still exists in Shahjahanpur, though the Master is physically no more there. There is this deep-seated

---

[186] *What is Sahaj Marg (A Preceptor's Guide)*, p.71-72.

fear, you know, that when you give, you are selling yourself... Isn't it? It is receiving which makes us obliged to the giver. How can giving make you obliged?...

"My Master never asked for anything. When the Shahjahanpur ashram was proposed, he was extremely reluctant to have an ashram, because he knew the attitude of the abhyasis. Those who never give are the biggest protesters, because they want to justify their non-giving. The one who gives quietly, puts the money somewhere and walks away. He doesn't want it to be known; he is shy of his charity. 'Let not thy right hand know what they left hand has done.' But the one who is not giving, he is raising both his arms up in protest. 'Why should I give? Why Sahaj Marg asks for money?' And in that act, in that desperate shout, he exposes the emptiness of his hands and, unfortunately, the emptiness of his heart."[187]

Two years later, Chariji added the following comments about the same topics, plus hierarchy:

"I remember after the Shahjahanpur ashram had been built, and I was taking Babuji around on a sort of inspection circuit the day before the inauguration, one boy came and said, 'Babuji, Babuji, this is wrong, that is wrong.' Babuji was, of course, a little concerned, you see, upset. Yet he was always the gentleman and he said, 'Yes, I should have consulted you before I started planning this ashram.' Of course, what he really meant was, 'Why didn't you tell me your views in the beginning?' It is easy to make comments after everything is done. As we say in English, 'It is easy to be wise after the event.' I mean, every one of us is wise after the event. We get drunk, next morning we are wise; at least when the headache is still on and the hangover is still going on, we are a little wise. We say, 'Today we won't drink.' But in the evening the thirst begins all over again and we reach for the bottle. That sort of wisdom doesn't last.[188]

"Now you may compare my Master's life with your life here. And, I repeat, when the ashram was built he was enormously relieved, you see, on one side, that he had escaped disgrace at the hands of his critics and, thanks to Lalaji Maharaj, he had successfully completed the ashram, so that he could entertain his guests, as he called the abhyasis, under more favourable circumstances, more comfortable circumstances, give them better lodging, give them more facilities than he had in his house. His

---

[187] *What is Sahaj Marg (A Preceptor's Guide),* p.76.

[188] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.189-190.

prime motive in establishing ashrams was to provide comfort for abhyasis.

"I may also say that that ashram was enormously expensive for the time in which it was made. In 1975, when we opened that ashram, it had cost us already twenty-two lakhs, which is 2.2 million rupees. It is wrong to say that Babuji had no money, and that he had no thoughts about planning and he did not build ashrams. We have eighteen ashrams in India; most of them built in Babuji's lifetime, most of them opened by him, inaugurated by him, blessed by him — small ones, big ones, medium ones, cottages, thatched huts.

"It is too facile to say that every house should be an ashram. We have to go out of our house to seek peace elsewhere. This is an old tradition, everybody should know it. Of course, idealistically speaking, every house should become an ashram; and it happens when the man inside, the woman inside, become saints, then it becomes an ashram. The house by itself is always a house. What it is depends on who lives in it. If there is a king in it, it is a palace; if there is a prostitute in it, it is a bordello, a brothel; if there is a doctor in it, it is a clinic; if there is a saint in it, it is an ashram; if God lives in it, it is a temple.

"Please remember this, because it is too easy to make this mistake of thinking that we don't need administration, we don't need organization, there are hierarchies — there are hierarchies everywhere. In Sahaj Marg we have the invisible hierarchy of the ultimate divinity we call the Centre, succeeded by Lord Krishna, the *avatar* of Purusha who is in control of this Yuga, under whom, or with whom — whichever way you wish to say — came Lalaji Maharaj, the founder of our movement, next to him Babuji, and I hope the river will flow along and produce a stream of such people. This is the spiritual hierarchy.

"We have hierarchies in our living systems. We have the heart, without which we could not exist. We have also the brain which is not so important, but without which also perhaps we would not be able to exist, except in a coma. We have the hierarchies of the mental system, the intellectual system, the circulatory system; then comes the digestive system, the excretory system, you see, in order. There is nothing higher, there is nothing lower; it is a whole group of systems working together to keep this organization alive. Without a hierarchy nothing exists, not even an individual human being. This is my conviction! This is my submission, with all humility, for those who think of hierarchies as something stupid, something destructive, please examine yourself — if you can exist without a hierarchy within your own living biological, neurological, etc. system, well, you would be that great thing, a liberated soul, no more in the body. Only liberated souls can exist without this

hierarchy. But when they come back to teach others, to offer what they have to others, immediately a hierarchy becomes apparent.

"Second hierarchy we have — Babuji as the Master, the preceptors as the medium of his work, the abhyasis as the recipients of his grace. It is arguable that we could do away with this hierarchy in the middle — preceptors are not essential. But even then you have a two-level hierarchy of the Master and the disciple. In the teaching you have again a hierarchical structure, that you start with something, go up to something, go up to something else, rise more beyond that. Eventually you will come to a level where there is no more need for hierarchies. But there is a surprising thing, that when you come into the brighter world — I don't know if the secret has been revealed to many of you — there too exists a hierarchy. It inevitably must, you see. I mean, until everything in this universe either collapses into a black hole of science, or becomes divinised and totally merged with the Absolute, when all is one and one is all, I cannot see how we can do without hierarchies...

"When I first joined the Mission, there were thirteen preceptors. So the working committee of the Mission contained all the thirteen preceptors — thank heavens — because if there had been only two, there would have been a president, a secretary, and a treasurer, and nothing else. Thirteen preceptors. When I became the fourteenth, I was added to the list of working committee members. Later on, I became the secretary. You know, step by step I was rising in the hierarchy of which we are so critical. Then I introduced a rule, because now there were forty-five preceptors and it was a mess to talk to forty-five people as a working committee. So I told Babuji we have to cut it down and bring it down to fifteen. He agreed. So now we had the preceptors, a working committee with only fifteen members, and the Master. One line, one more step in the hierarchy had been added because it was inevitable, it was essential, without which we could not work."[189]

So what to do about it ? Says Chari:

"Now when we talk of a mission, the instinctive revulsion, revolt against the word 'mission' you should kindly remove from your minds, it can be done by cleaning, one technique. The better thing is to accept that it is only a name, and what does it matter if Sigismund Leiber is called Sigismund Niebel or Helmut Peiper, it doesn't matter, as long as the man is the same. I mean, Helmut Peiper could also be called Sigismund Niebel for all I care. What I mean is, it is the person who is valuable, not his name. So what is the Mission doing? The Mission is an organization.

---

[189] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.194-199.

Why do we need an organization? Precisely to harness the efforts of the Master for humanity. You see, if it was one Master serving one disciple, we don't need anything. They could have a walking stick, the Master holding one end of it, the disciple holding the other end of it and walking free wherever they go, being fed, they can sit and transmit under a tree and he reaches his illumination and both go into, I don't know, *mahasamadhi* there itself. The job is over. But when you have to build an institution where you have to take whatever you are offering to the people, not like a temple or a church where you invite the people to come to you, you need an organization. And what is the organization for? It is for your benefit.

"So please remember, the organization exists for you, books are printed for you. If the Master travels, he travels for you. If there is going to be an ashram, it is for you.

"So organization only reflects the growth of an institution. In the days when Europe had no cars, and people were wandering on their feet, you had no traffic rules, no green and red lights, no policemen. You could walk as you choose, left side, right side. What did it matter if you bumped into another human being? Nobody was killed. But when you have cars of six hundred horsepower, and hundreds of thousands of them on the roads, obviously you need discipline, you need an organization, you need electricity, you need lights, you need a powerhouse, you need tax revenues. How is it going to run without your contributing to it?

"It is a task of unimaginable scope that my Master has undertaken. And if you belittle it, you belittle evolution itself, you belittle God Himself. So that is all I have to say about the Mission. Please remember, because from your conviction alone can come conviction when you speak to others. We don't speak because we are wise. I mean, a really wise man knows that what he transmits is confidence, conviction, which he has earned out of his own personal experience of the path. Wisdom you can get from books, from dictionaries. Conviction must come from inner conviction; strength must come from inner strength; confidence must come from inner confidence. These things, unless we have we cannot give them to others. Therefore I pray, you see, that all of you should get right understanding of the system, of the Master, of what we are doing. We are doing nothing less than endeavouring to upgrade humanity to the level of the angels and gods and beyond. It is not an ordinary task, it is not even a super-human task. It is a divine task in which you are involved. Please understand it and work accordingly."[190]

---

[190] *What is Sahaj Marg (A Preceptor's Guide)*, p.73-77.

"I have said in the past, I repeat it again, a mission is not a structure of brick and mortar, it is that which we adopt as the purpose of our life. 'What is your mission in life?' you are asked. My mission is my Master's Mission. 'What is his Mission?' 'His Master's Mission.' 'What was it?' To offer to humanity, in the words of my Master, 'suffering humanity', a simple, universally acceptable, easily practicable system of practice which, in a short space of time, will enable them to find within themselves what they have been desperately, stupidly, unsuccessfully seeking outside."[191]

In conclusion:

"When we take His Mission and make it ours, we participate in His work, and by doing so we become by degrees, more and more like Him."[192]

And since He constantly uses the already mentioned spiritual tools, we know how to emulate Him in order to attain our real goal at the same time we participate in the proper use and functioning of his Mission.

[191] Ibid., p.38-39.

[192] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. II, p.55.

— 11 —

THE USE AND MISUSE OF PRECEPTORS

Although "preceptors are not essential," we must admit that they exist. Furthermore, their particular function and status make them ready-made objects for the transference phenomenon already described. To make these functions and status more explicit, I have summarized Sahaj Marg literature on this topic.[193]

The preceptors are supposed to constitute the heart of the Mission, in each centre. This supposes a certain spiritual elevation, a certain model of behaviour, and sufficient unity and harmony among them to function as a real heart for brothers and sisters already introduced, and as a spiritual magnet for others.

"Sometimes I wish that Babuji would have called preceptors not preceptors but examples; those who can stand or sit down or lie down and be exemplars for the rest of humanity to follow."[194]

In order to be able to function as loyal and efficient agents of the Master, they should develop:

- The willingness to serve, which may be considered the fundamental prerequisite.
- Some spiritual qualities, i.e., will, obedience, faith, and love.

---

[193] What follows is mainly based on *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II and III, (either summarized, or quoted), and on preceptor's talks given in Pune in May 1991.

[194] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. VII, p.170.

- Some psychological or human features already mentioned, gathered in the concept of nobility of character, of a behaviour which can be considered as a model for other abhyasis. This point has been emphasized several times by Chari:

  "So character formation for the preceptor is not only of personal importance for his own or her own personal evolution, spiritual and otherwise, it is of the utmost importance in maintaining the purity of the system undiluted and its efficacy undiminished."[195]

  Happily, this point has also been developed by several preceptors during their seminar in Pune (1991), whose topic was The Preceptor's Role in the Abhyasi's Sadhana.

- Start with themselves, especially regarding their behaviour, attitude, and character, so as to be credible models for abhyasis. They should make sufficient progress themselves so that may stimulate their brothers and sisters to progress, for this gives confidence in oneself and faith in the Master.

- Remain modest, despite their function,[196] letting Master work through them rather than considering themselves as 'mini-gurus' who know even better than the Masters themselves what the truths are.

- Be ready to listen to the abhyasis, with patience and generosity.

- Be authentic and realistic, presenting things as they are to abhyasis right from the beginning, so as to avoid misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations from the abhyasis.

---

[195] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.66.

[196] Let us repeat here that preceptorship is not a certificate of capacity but a permission of the Master.

- Develop the capacity to forgive, especially when they are the target for the negative tendencies of the abhyasis. If possible, they should also even remain non-affected, a capacity which avoids having to go through the 'process' of forgiving.

Preceptors should develop the ability to interact among themselves[197] and with other abhyasis in a harmonious way. They should refrain from competition among themselves, playing the well-known games: Who is giving the best sittings? Who has the most abhyasis for regular sittings? Who has more seniority?

It is advisable to refrain from developing friendships and unnecessary socializing with abhyasis. The same should be said about the relationships between themselves, which may lead to an excess of loyalty to a particular 'chief'-preceptor, as Chariji pointed out at the Sariska seminar (May 1990):

"Groups of preceptors are being created everywhere. Obedient within themselves. One preceptor is the chief, a sort of an *upa*-master, there, you know [laughter] *Uparashtrapathi*, *Upa*-Master! Therefore loyalty breaks. This man becomes proud; the other becomes subservient to him to whom they should not be subservient. They obey a source of authority which is not a real source of authority. Therefore, groups of preceptors are being created, loyal within themselves, accommodating within themselves, obedient within themselves, flouting the Master's orders, flouting his instructions, flouting his wishes."[198]

This shows clearly that we do not pretend that preceptors are already what they should be, or behave as they should behave. As a matter of fact, they have been diversely considered by their spiritual guides at different times:

---

[197] A special sub-chapter deals with these particular interactions between preceptors themselves, so only a few points are presented here.

[198] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.35-36.

"Preceptors are made largely for their own evolution."[199]

"Most of the preceptors can be compared to children who are happy with their toys. All think that they have developed the spirit of renunciation and sacrifice in themselves. But none of them has really done so."[200]

"Babuji has written to me: 'It is their job to clean, clean, and clean as thoroughly as they can. Rest is up to the Master.' Sometimes it is difficult to accept this because we like to feel proud that we are helping the Master. Therefore this concept of helping the Master is a disastrous concept. We are serving the Master, yes. Helping the Master, not at all. He doesn't need our help."[201]

"It is arguable that we could do away with this hierarchy in the middle — preceptors are not essential."[202]

"So the preceptor is above all a very vital link, you see, otherwise the Master would not have created preceptors. He would not have created them because they would not have been necessary. But that they are necessary doesn't mean that weak preceptors, ineffective preceptors, useless preceptors, idle preceptors, can suffice. In a perfect system, every part must partake of that perfection."[203]

"A perfect system should not develop heat at all. It is no less true of the preceptors. There should be no heat in a preceptor, no anger, no annoyance."[204]

"The preceptor must function so efficiently that there should be no difference between his functioning and the Master's functioning."[205]

These statements make it very clear that preceptors, as links or agents of the Master, constitute a kind of intermediary, a kind of mediator if not middleman between 'non-specialized-abhyasis' and the guru. As a consequence, they constitute both appropriate targets for our transferred emotions, and good models for developing adult and

---

199 *Proceedings of the Preceptors' Seminar*, May 2 to 4, 1991, Pune, India, p.18.

200 Lalaji speaking to Babuji. *Autobiography of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.19.

201 *A Preceptor's Guide*, 1990, vol. III, p.74.

202 Ibid., p.196.

203 Ibid., p.75.

204 Ibid., p.65.

205 Ibid., p.68.

brotherly relationship, when combined efforts make this possible.

Having arrived at this point, which constitutes a kind of crossroads in the present topic, we will continue as follows. First we shall rapidly see how preceptors may be put into difficult situations in their interactions with other abhyasis, and what their own misuses may be. Consequently, it is hoped that a kind of dis-idealization and a more realistic appreciation are achieved.

Some Psychological Difficulties Encountered by Preceptors

We have said that preceptors should ideally become loyal and efficient agents of the Master, in the hope that ideally they will be able to find the most adequate answers to give to abhyasis at the interactional or spiritual level. In other words, being themselves clean, lucid, and subtle enough to feel at what level of consciousness the problems, the questions, or the behaviour offered by the abhyasis to the preceptors are situated, they should be able to choose the right answer at the adequate level in each particular case. Such an ideal is not yet a reality, and two kinds of emotive reactions from preceptors are observed.

These problems brought to the preceptors can be spiritual, psychological, or physical in nature, or a mixture. Seriousness can vary from a transient disturbance and slight imbalance of the abhyasi to a real life crisis, where inner conflicts between different egoistic tendencies, problems of relationship with others, and professional difficulties are all more or less present, with the result of questioning the link with the Master himself and consequently the practice and the integration of the abhyasi in the Mission.

Being more or less moved when confronted with such situations, the preceptor may lose his own balance in reaction:

I. The flight response is a frequent reaction, when the preceptor is consciously or unconsciously frightened by what is presented because this problem resonates too intensively in him or herself. This means, of course, that to some extent at least, the preceptor has the same kind of problem. As a consequence, the preceptor is obliged to defend himself/herself against the intense emotional reactions that have been triggered. One way is the flight response, which is revealed in different ways:

a) The problem is simply ignored: the preceptor behaves as if he/she has not heard the question or the complaint.[206] Of course, a significant silence may sometimes be the most adequate response. However, when an abhyasi is superficially filling the limited time available for the sitting with personal complaints, or criticism of others, and the preceptor doesn't react at all, here we are dealing psychologically with a direct consequence of a repression-reaction from the part of the preceptor, that may even end in complete avoidance of 'meeting' this abhyasi. Consequently, the abhyasi will feel misunderstood and a covert or overt conflict with the preceptor will occur sooner or later.

b) The problem is minimized or banalized, for example by a generalized remark, or by a joke.

c) The abhyasi is referred to a specialist or to another preceptor, or even to the President of the Mission. In this case, the preceptor is attempting to get rid of the problem,

---

[206] Let us repeat that it may be a conscious or an unconscious reaction on the part of the preceptor.

instead of facing it quietly, trying at least to enumerate ways of dealing with it, among which consulting a specialist or a more experienced preceptor may also be considered.

II. In the opposite to the flight-response, we have all kinds of over-reactions. In fact, the inner response is the same in the two overt forms, but here the over-reaction is shown directly instead of being turned inward in avoidance behaviour.

a) Dramatization may take place, for example through exclamations, or the use of strong words. The preceptor may also start to speak about a similar or different problem he or she has or has had, so that the abhyasi feels discouraged or smothered by the preceptor's overflow of words. Another way of dramatizing is to become angry or sad or jealous in response to the problems brought by the abhyasis. This tendency to be 'contaminated' by the emotional flow of our brothers and sisters is humanly understandable. However, as Chariji pointed out on several occasions:

> "When you want to help an abhyasi, you cannot afford to be emotional. Otherwise you are like a doctor who cuts the patient open for surgery and the sight of the blood makes him faint. What's the use? So you see, there is no place, no room for emotion... People may think this fellow has a cold heart, you know, 'He doesn't even weep when somebody is dying.' That's not the time for weeping. Weeping is after somebody is dead; not when they are dying. So please remember this, no emotion, no personal involvement, no excitation, however ghastly a situation you may find yourself in. Because instantly you will lose your faith and your will power yourself."[207]

> "Now I believe when preceptors get angry and lose their temper, it is perhaps a dissipation of that energy in the form of heat that they are transferring. What I mean to suggest is that if you utilize the

[207] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.126.

parallel from the engineering sciences, especially the science of transmission of energy, a perfect system should not develop heat at all. It is no less true of the preceptors. There should be no heat in a preceptor, no anger, no annoyance. What for? That is why the personal qualities about which I spoke on the first day are so important, you see: character formation, self-regulation, modifying our behaviour, etiquette, love, compassion, mercy, all to be transmitted through ourselves undiluted by us, nothing held back for ourselves..."[208]

To remain serene, uncontaminated by emotional reactions is especially difficult for preceptors when they are the target of negative emotions on the part of abhyasis. For example, the 'newly-made preceptor' may arouse jealousy in others who also wished to become preceptors, and were not chosen. But the preceptor's attitude may provoke or strengthen such reactions, during the transitional phase. Some abhyasis may not request individual sittings from this preceptor for a certain time, but the situation can also lead to active denigration, with the risk of coalitions and escalation if the preceptor falls into the traps of emotional reaction.

b) Condemning, moralizing, judging may also take place as an emotionally triggered response. If the emotion is intense, the rigid answer is usually condemning in its form and starts usually with an accusing 'you', instead of 'one' or 'we', which is used when there is some moderation in the response of the preceptor.

Of course, judging is very common, due either to the above-mentioned phenomenon of resonance, or to a lack of openness to the other's point of view. As Chariji explained,

"So pain, suffering, must not be viewed in relation to yourself, to what you would feel... We have to look at suffering and pain in

---

[208] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.65.

relation to the person who is suffering that pain; then we will be able to understand what its reality is."[209]

c) Uniting in a coalition is also possible, and may be considered as a particular case of mutual seduction with the corrupting consequences we have already mentioned, ending in so-called friendship among certain abhyasis, and enmity towards others.

So, a preceptor may alternatively over-react to certain abhyasis by undue moralization and under-react to others in the same kind of situation, by unduly compromising, avoiding judgment, or by whatever means our tricky ego is able to invent. All these reactions may exist between preceptors too, as we will see in a special sub-chapter.[210]

The Positive Roles of Preceptors and Abhyasis

Preceptorship is only one particular way among many to serve the Master in his Mission. When a preceptor is chosen for this job he may of course feel valorized, sometimes unfortunately to the point of becoming proud or arrogant or vain, although we may suppose that usually the chosen preceptor doesn't know all the reasons why he or she has been requested to do this job at a particular time and in a particular place. As far as I am concerned, for example, I have the feeling that one of the reasons for me to become involved in this type of spiritual activity was to receive the necessary help for letting go instead of trying to control things and act upon them as I used to.

---

[209] Ibid., p.20.

[210] I mentioned earlier that pointing out some of the difficulties that preceptors may encounter at a psychological level would help us to dis-idealize these particular individuals called preceptors in Shri Ram Chandra Mission. We hope, however, that this report doesn't lead us beyond this point of dis-idealization, which would become an uncalled-for disqualification.

Moreover, Chariji recently said:

"Preceptors do the spectacular or overtly visible work in the Mission, another kind of work being done through some discreet abhyasis in each centre."[211]

A preceptor needs abhyasis in order to do his/her work; in other words, a preceptor without abhyasis is useless. So abhyasis are as necessary as preceptors for the spiritual work that has to be done.

As a consequence of these two above reasons, a preceptor should remain modest and not consider himself or herself as a superior person, either spiritually or psychologically. In order to avoid such a definition of relationship, abhyasis should consider themselves, and be considered by their preceptors, as sent by the Master in order to be worked upon and to allow the preceptor to work for his own benefit. As the following illustrates:

"Now we must understand that the preceptors are not created to help the Master. This is a very unfortunate meaning some people have derived that we are helping the Master. We are serving the Master. Now helping and serving are two different things. I don't think my Master ever needed anybody's help. He needed people to work. And why did he need us? Because left to himself, the number of people on whom he could directly work would have been very limited. But in his generosity, in his love for human beings, to spread this enormous privilege and the advantage of the Sahaj Marg system, he needed people who could work as if he was working. Not to help him, please remember that.

"But it is like from one main pipe you take off twenty-five branches and make that water available to twenty-five households. It is a distribution system in which we are involved, you see, not in a help system. So we are distributors, we are links, we are connectors, we are conduits, we are distributors, essentially. And if the distribution outlet is choked, that outlet becomes inoperative, the benefit is denied. So an idle preceptor is worse than no preceptor at that point. A useless preceptor is worse than no preceptor. Therefore Babuji Maharaj used to say, in his last years, that perhaps he had made a mistake in having preceptors at all.

---

[211] January 1991, at the airport in Zürich.

He became so disillusioned with the preceptors because he found that conduits were trying to become the source. The link was trying to take upon itself the pride of being the originator of the power, the prime mover, which is both untrue and perhaps immoral, too.

"So we should respect the role that we are assigned, play the role that has been apportioned to us, perfectly. And in that perfection, in that humble attitude of being nothing more than a servant of the Master, a worker of the Master, lies the possibility of our own speedy evolution."[212]

Although preceptors should let the Master work within themselves as much as possible,[213] they should not allow themselves to get carried away by their ego, as mentioned above. If a preceptor has gone beyond this limit, he is going to behave as if it would not be necessary any more to refer to, or even for anyone to visit the incarnated Master. For the same egoistic reason, he/she is going to consider abhyasis as 'his' or 'her' own abhyasis, rather than the Master's.

Reciprocally, when abhyasis are saying 'my' preceptor, or even 'my beloved preceptor', they are caught in emotional reactions, in possessive attachment, transferring ancient relationships to their preceptor. We should be conscious of when we are saying 'my' preceptor, because, in fact, preceptors are only preceptors of the Master. As a consequence, we would avoid treating the preceptor as a parent, a habit which pushes us to behave as children or teenagers. We would also avoid considering the preceptor as a boss, or friend.

The proper relationship between an abhyasi and a preceptor should be that of two adult siblings.[214] As a

---

[212] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.70-71.

[213] The underlying principle of this statement has been described earlier as the fifth characteristic of a spiritualized psychology, called the principle of minimal interference.

[214] Psychology (especially Family Therapy) has recently shown how important it is to take care of the definition of the relationship between people, because it is hierarchically more highly situated than the content of their interactions,

consequence, the abhyasi meets the preceptor for a sitting, which both consider as coming from the Master, to whom both normally feel grateful. Babuji said that we should "connect our mind to the preceptor and our heart to the Master."[215] We can do the same with the advice of Chariji about being possessive about the Master and the Mission only.

An efficient preceptor, as an adult brother or sister, could be defined as one who is able to clean us, transmit to us, give us appropriate individual and group sittings, and behave in a correct brotherly way with us. This also includes, of course, the capacity for this kind of preceptor to make some realistic observations on our practice or even sometimes on our behaviour, and to refuse favours to us sometimes, in a non-hurting, explanatory, moderate, realistic manner.

As Chariji said when this topic of use and misuses of preceptors was discussed:

"A good preceptor is not the one who gives you a tap on the shoulder and says that everything is okay. He is not the one to reassure you."[216]

An effective abhyasi should also be able to tell the truth about himself to a preceptor, and also about the preceptor if he or she is not behaving in an appropriate manner, if possible without fear and emotion, so that preceptors and abhyasis can help each other.[217] For example, during a group discussion after satsangh, I was correctly stopped by a sister

---

i.e., the type of relationship constantly influences the content (for instance the words, or the sentences pronounced).

[215] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.284.

[216] Informal conversation, Madras, July 1991.

[217] As previously said, preceptors should normally constitute models of behaviour and character, up to the point of helping abhyasis to remodel their own character. But sometimes abhyasis may also educate preceptors, and in fact they do it not so rarely.

abhyasi when I had started to give a kind of lecture instead of letting other abhyasis give their personal feelings. This abhyasi didn't say it in a hurtful way, but merely expressed her wish that other abhyasis could talk. I say this because I know that many abhyasis have some remarks to make to preceptors but do not dare for fear of causing offense and being rebuked in return.

So let us recall that non-hurting ways of communicating with another person include:[218]

- Asking questions, rather than throwing reproaches assertively or even aggressively;
- 'Wondering why', rather than making risky interpretations;
- Starting sentences with 'I' feel rather than 'You'.

Let me give a few imagined examples that may help abhyasis who would like to say something to their preceptors without hurting them:

- "Now I feel judged because, unless I didn't understand you properly, what I heard made me think I am not a good person."
- "I feel frustrated because I had just started trying to say something that was very important for me, that I have never said to anybody before, and I was interrupted and given advice. That isn't productive for me right now."
- "I know that I should keep a diary, but I don't see you using one to write about the sittings you give me, so I didn't realise that I really should."

---

[218] Of course, we will be much helped in our way of communicating verbally if at the same time we remember Him and use subtle and silent positive suggestions.

Four Common Types of Relationships Between Abhyasis and Preceptors

The following are four main cases for consideration:

1. Relating as a child to the preceptor, who on his part may behave in a parental way. We may be able to recognize such a definition of relationship by:

- A propensity for reporting all our sorrows in detail to him and suggest, more or less consciously, more or less openly, that we be helped in several worldly problems;
- Being prone to praise our preceptor, making him believe he is the best, seducing him with flattery in the hope that he will overlook, for instance, our lack of discipline;[219]
- Listening to requested advice with ambivalence, and usually not practising it. Or we show apparent submission to him, but criticize him when he is not present, either to ourselves or in discussions with other abhyasis or preceptors, or with the preceptor-in-charge or the President of the Mission;
- Noticing that 'our' preceptor is pleased when we have chosen him or her because of the attraction to his or her personality, and not just because of living nearest to us;[220]
- Not being astonished to receive moralistic speeches such as our father used to give us, or long lists of over-protective maternal advice with the same irritating effect. Establishing a totally dependent relationship in which our preceptor is almost everything for us: healer, doctor, administrative adviser, occasional astrologer, and what not. As a 'psychiatrist-preceptor-abhyasi', I have, on

---

[219] Let us repeat that all 'he' or 'him' are including the 'she' or 'her'.

[220] Some similar observations have been made and sent to me by Babeth Harmitt, a French preceptor.

several occasions, had to deal with delicate situations like this, and had to be very careful to avoid unrealistic expectations and confusion of roles and of the different kinds of services offered.

2. Relating to our preceptor as a mere friend is, of course, another way of reinforcing a horizontal human link, to the prejudice of the vertical divine link with the Master. I have witnessed the consequences of this many times in our Mission, as well as in different institutions, when strong sub-groups form which harm the spiritual development of the participants as well as the local centre.

   We have already seen how this is harmful because of the preferences, the privileges, the special loyalties we develop which inevitably place us in tight 'triangulations' as we call them in family therapy [19]. In such a situation, a third person must inevitably play the role of the 'bad one', the excluded one, the jealous one, the moralistic one, or the stupid one, whereas two or more accomplices socialize together. In such a relationship, is it possible for 'our' preceptor to remain impartial? Dare he or she make a remark to correct us? The preceptor is trapped. If 'our' preceptor is repeatedly reassuring us when it is not appropriate, then most probably there is something wrong and our relationship is too involved, too friendly. If we have a complicity with our preceptor against another one, or against other abhyasis, the same conclusion can be reached. If we socialize repeatedly with 'our' preceptor, again the same conclusion is valid. The same is true when we are unduly engaged in small talk and jokes with 'our' preceptor when we meet him.

   This kind of over-attachment is pernicious, and has been denounced several times in the history of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. In order to underline it once more, we

give below some extracts of one of Chari's famous speeches, 'Give Your Heart To the Master.'

"Dear brothers and sisters, I want to very delicately draw your attention to an important statement by Master in Munich in 1980. He said, 'Connect your mind with that of the preceptor and your heart with that of the Master.' I think this is very important and that is why my Master said it. In fact, he should have said it, perhaps, on the day he started the Mission. I think most of our problems come because we do not know to whom we should be attached in the heart. I was talking to a young abhyasi this morning and she was miserable, heartbroken, disillusioned because she had an unnecessary, undue attachment with her preceptor. And when that preceptor was exposed to be something else than what she had thought him to be, her world was shattered. It is Master's grace that her faith in Sahaj Marg was not shattered, too. That has happened with other persons. I know many abhyasis who were good abhyasis; today they are not with us. Because they were attached with their preceptors and not to the Master.

"Now, it is very difficult for my Master to have spoken about this. How could he possibly say, 'Connect your heart to mine'? It's not done, you see. But, when he had to say this in 1980, you can imagine how much anguish there must have been in his heart; not because of the fact that abhyasis did not give him their hearts, he did not need them, he had his Master's heart, that was enough, but because of the damage the abhyasis were doing to themselves and their spiritual future. And this must have been very widespread for him to have spoken out like that in Munich. In fact, the disease must have spread so much as to be almost incurable, because we see what happened just a few years later after he passed away. There have risen many Masters. And those who are attached to them are people who are disillusioned, who have lost their faith. And most unfortunately, many of them have turned away from Sahaj Marg altogether, blaming the Master for this. Now, what can the poor Master do? His message was very clear, and he had said this in private so often, to my personal knowledge. And subsequently, he had to say it in public. So why was it necessary? That was his, what should I say, sorrow, his sole disappointment that the abhyasis were doing just the opposite. They were giving their mind to the Master and their heart to their own preceptors. This has happened... [break in tape] is in an article, I don't remember which one, called 'Idol Worship'. You will find that I also almost made this mistake until Babuji, in his merciful love for me, gave me a shock. He said, 'He is his abhyasi, not mine.' It was a rude shock to me that my Master thought like that, but it was

true. Fortunately, he said this because otherwise I would have been doomed. So, it is a pity that Babuji did not say this more often to more people. Because I think many abhyasis would have been saved from making this very bad, very damaging mistake."[221]

So what to do when we come to realise into what kind of an abnormal and harmful relationship we have fallen? Let Chariji give us the solution:

"So, always refer to the heart. 'Is this preceptor, whom I respect, whom I admire, whom I follow, is he telling me the right thing? Don't ask the intellect; ask the heart. And as Babuji used to say, 'Read the books', because everything is there.'"[222]

Going even further:

"If the teaching is not what it should be, then we must start suspecting the preceptors."[223]

As a conclusion:

"Now, all this can be possible only if you put the Master in your heart. If you put something else, maybe a preceptor, maybe your boyfriend, maybe somebody else, I don't know, what are you going to have? It is like children collecting small stones and putting them in their drawers. It only adds weight, it doesn't change the quality of things, nothing grows, and one day they have to be thrown away. So, what we put in our hearts must deserve that place, and it is important that we recognize this. Because if it does not deserve that love, it is useless."[224]

3. As we know, a friend may become an enemy when friendship is replaced by hate and jealousy. Friendship turns into enmity, consuming a significant part of our spiritual energy. It constitutes a strong attachment, sometimes very, very difficult to move, like two boxers caught

---

[221] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.284-285.

[222] Ibid., p.287.

[223] Ibid.

[224] Ibid, p.287.

in a clinch.[225] Displacement of these negative emotions on the practice or the Master is also a risk, especially in the case of escalation between the two protagonists, with the extreme result of leaving the Mission.

4. However, suppose we are involved in an adult-to-adult relationship with 'one' preceptor and no longer with 'our' preceptor. This will be a relationship devoid of all the impediments described above. We will not be overly concerned by the presence or absence of our mascot or beloved preceptor in the satsangh hall, depriving us of feeling the real Master inside us. In other words, there will be no special problems: we simply feel confident in our preceptor, feel respect for him and also feel that we are respected. He can be a teacher and a counselor without us becoming his child. The relationship will be frank and clear, our respective roles will remain well-defined, and our communion, when we interact, will be a communion with the Master rather than between the two of us. Even if previous to our joining the Mission we were close friends, our 'horizontal' link will be progressively disbanded and replaced by a preferential 'vertical' link with the Master. This may appear frightening and difficult to some of us. But in fact, the ancient complicity can be shifted to a new one, one of sharing the same link with Him who is the only One deserving our love, the sole real Friend with whom we may find real and permanent security. As Chariji said jokingly, when some of us were speaking of banks and money, "I am the only safe safe!"[226]

---

[225] It is, for example, well-known in psychology that so called 'sado-masochistic' relationships are very stable, very difficult to change.

[226] Informal conversation, Geneva, August 1990.

Relationships Between Preceptors

Preceptors are also abhyasis. Consequently, all that has been said applies to the relationships which preceptors develop amongst themselves. This is a touchy subject, but requires lucidity and frankness about the misuses preceptors sometimes make of the relationships between each other.

One may ask, "Should preceptors not be models of behaviour and character? Is it not their duty to be good examples for abhyasis? Didn't we say that they should develop harmonious interactions, in complementary relationships?" Complementary relationships prevail between two or more people, when each one respects his specific role, different from the others'. However, it is obvious that preceptors have more or less the same roles and status, and as a consequence rivalry is more likely to be present. The risk of such a type of relationship increases with the number of preceptors, especially when they have to organize the different tasks necessary for the functioning of a centre or country.

It is a widespread human reaction that when two people have similar functions, they try to express differences between themselves. Having not yet surrendered to the Master, they get trapped in the game of 'who is the first?' or 'who is superior to the other?' which constitutes a meagre compensation for being unable to develop sufficient brotherhood. As Chariji explains:

"All the problems between preceptors, problem of egoism, problem of position, of power, is because we see ourselves as ourselves and the other person as the other. No linking Master who is present in both of us. Therefore we have these problems. There is no solidarity, there is no oneness, there is no brotherhood. Brotherhood as we are today cannot exist. You take this from me, I am prepared to write it in letters of iron

and put it up here, not gold. If we are as we are, there shall never be any brotherhood, because we are all different."[227]

"Preceptors should avoid mutual criticism and recrimination. They should remember that they are part of a spiritual brotherhood and should strive to create it first among themselves, before they can hope to establish such a brotherhood among abhyasis.

"It's very simple, you see. It's like children quarreling with each other and saying, 'Mama, Mama, he hit me first. He hit me first. He is useless. He is a dog. He is a cow. He is a donkey.' And the mother says, 'Yes, yes, you are all nice. Come and eat some pizza. I have it ready.' She diverts their mind from their mutual quarrel, and harmony is restored and everything is nice.

"But if as preceptors we indulge in this criticism of each other — it is known, you see, it has been referred to Babuji himself several times. That one preceptor told an abhyasi, 'Don't go to the other preceptor because he doesn't know how to work.' Knowing that Babuji has made that other man a preceptor, too. It is a criticism of the Master himself that he is a darn fool, he doesn't know whom to make a preceptor. So ultimately, mutual criticism means criticism of the Master who made you. That should be avoided.

"Also, unless we set an example as a brotherhood within the larger brotherhood of the Mission, the abhyasis are going to fight amongst themselves. 'Oh, I am his abhyasi.' 'I am her abhyasi. What do you know about Sahaj Marg?' 'She teaches better.' So we create dissension."[228]

For example, we may understand, if not approve, the difficulty for a preceptor who has remained the only one present in a particular place, in sharing his responsibilities with a newcomer who was previously 'only' an abhyasi, to whom this preceptor was giving sittings without reciprocity.

There are varied reasons for rivalry among preceptors, too numerous to mention. Any kind of justification, any object for competition may be chosen; different positions preceptors have in the Mission, the type of permission (provisional or full), the type of activities or responsibilities they have in their centre or country, etc.

---

[227] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.17.

[228] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.65-66.

As Chariji exhorted in his New Year's message for European abhyasis, December 1991:

"Preceptors must also remember that they should not have any power consciousness, or consciousness of their position in the Mission. They are workers in the hands of the Master, instruments in the hands of the Master, and must be ready to serve anybody at any time. We should be available at all times. Great changes have been taking place in the world, and are continuing to take place in this world, and our own efforts to serve humanity must match these changes. We must be prepared to go out to help them now."

So, ideally, such difficulties should not exist and preceptors should have the sole feeling of being abhyasis, maybe 'specialized-abhyasis' to some extent, at the Master's service, as Chariji has explained very clearly on different occasions:

"After all, we are also abhyasis. This is something which we should remember with very great attention, that for himself or herself, a preceptor is only an abhyasi. Babuji has said this again and again. He said, 'Don't say I am a father. For yourself, you are only what you are. You are the father of your child. Your child should say, "He is my father." Your wife should say, "He is my husband." Your father should say, "He is my son." What are you? "I am what I am." What have you to be? "That which my Master wants me to become."' Two answers in one. Pride comes when we assume a fatherhood which is not really ours. Because when I say, 'I am the father' — of what? It is for the child to say it. As Babuji said, 'A manager is the manager to the people who work under him, under his authority.' To say, 'I am a manager,' is in a sense very wrong. If you do your work, the people under you, who are being guided by you, should say, 'He is our manager and he manages well.' Therefore, he is called a manager. One who manages is a manager. A mis-manager cannot be a manager. He can be only a mis-manager (with one 's', not two).

"So you see, in this role that the preceptor has to play, there is no room for selfishness."[229]

"We should respect the role that we are assigned, play the role that has been apportioned to us, perfectly. And in that perfection, in that

---

[229] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.65-66.

humble attitude of being nothing more than a servant of the Master, a worker of the Master..."[230]

"Preceptors must take individual sittings from one another for purposes of cleaning. This also helps to avoid the development of egoism, that one preceptor is greater than the other. That is, of course, another unfortunate tendency that develops, that one preceptor thinks, 'I am greater than this fellow. Why should I go to him for sittings?' I am always tempted to give the example of the jack which you put under the car. When your tire is punctured, there is a small thing called a jack. I don't know what you call it — in English we say 'jack'. It goes under the car to lift the car. This is the value of humility. You submit to everything, bow before everything and everything has to bow before you eventually."[231]

So, rivalry and jealousy are not completely absent between preceptors, especially in the numerous 'triangles' which they are unable to avoid developing amongst themselves and with their spiritual guide, who is also the 'preceptor of preceptors'. In other words, they may be blind to their own jealousy, instead of seeing the truth (or at least part of the truth), as Chariji explained:

"So you see, it is not that this preceptor or that preceptor is important. We have this unfortunate thought sometimes, induced more by jealousy in comparing ourselves with others, that so and so is more important, Babuji cares more for him. I think, on the contrary, the Master, as a perfect Master, a wise Master, looked more after the weak links. Because he knows in his infinite wisdom that the weak link is the thing that is going to break the chain. Therefore, he looked more after the weak chains, trying to strengthen them, perfect them. Therefore, those who have seen Master and observed him closely would have found that even though he praised them overtly, he was really working upon them to strengthen them, toughen them, make them perfect instruments for his work. And if he failed, he was miserable. Because it was his failure, he thought."[232]

---

[230] Ibid., p.71.

[231] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.58.

[232] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.76.

Of course, preceptors may become jealous also for a more realistic reason related to their need for being loved or at least praised, which makes them frightened of missing out on something given to another one, especially to a rival preceptor, and especially if the latter is deserving:

"I cannot think of anything more rewarding than a smile of pleasure from the Master. People talk of the smile of the beloved, the smile of children, you know, but I have not found anything more rewarding than the smile of pleasure from the Master."[233]

Along this same line, maybe we can explain the tendency[234] to report to other brothers and sisters the special interactions that took place in our presence with our living Master: blowing our own trumpet, we more or less heavily insist or exaggerate our prominent role in these anecdotes. As a consequence, we elicit rivalry and jealousy, which may become part of an endless game where our boasting is the compensatory response to the bite of jealousy.

The President of the Mission is not the only one utilized by us to feed this triangular game. For example, some abhyasis have a tendency to ask the same questions of different preceptors, harvesting somewhat different answers, which is quite natural. What is less 'sahaj' is to insist upon these differences and even exaggerate them, in an attempt to elicit the pre-learned response from preceptors quarreling, as in the 'good old days' of their parents in family interactions.

Preceptors who are themselves sufficiently devoid of these impediments can overcome such difficulties, avoiding the pitfall of a coalition amongst themselves and a condemnation of a 'bad-child' abhyasi. This will happen if they have developed enough confidence in each other so they can

---

[233] Ibid., p.77.

[234] A tendency not exclusively possessed by abhyasi-preceptors, obviously!

converse frankly and, hopefully, with some humour as well. Only when preceptors and abhyasis have developed a sufficient psychological maturity can these harmful games and emotions related to inner insecurity disappear. This is explained in the 'Questions and Answers' part of *Role of the Master in Human Evolution.*

"We have to get used to a triangular relationship, and we don't want that. But surely when we become adult, this should drop off?... Generally in India, we believe that when the first child is followed by a second child, then the second child gets all the attention of the mother. So the first child gets jealous... my impression is that when your identity is threatened, then you become jealous of that which is the threat to your identity. And this is strengthened when the preceptor or the Master gives more attention to the new members than to the older members. It is necessary to give that attention. And I think it is a sign of maturity that a senior or an advanced member should recognize that the new person needs more attention, therefore he is getting more attention... So my observation is that jealousy is not because of not getting something tangible like progress, it is a craving for attention... At the root of that need for attention is always insecurity." [235]

Another sign of maturity is impartiality, a quality each abhyasi has to develop, and especially abhyasi-preceptors, so that they may avoid the pitfalls described above.

"Impartiality is of the essence of spiritual life. And what the Master cannot be, you, as preceptors, must not be also. I'm not saying all this to extol the Master. I'm saying all this so that I may be able to extol you. That here is a preceptor who is impartial. He or she has no friends. No special treatment for some abhyasis. No hatred against others. No bias religion-wise. No colour consciousness. But an impartiality, because all are my children. And if one is sick, I have to feed that child more. If one is sick, I have to give him medicine. If a third has no clothes, I have to buy clothes for him. A fourth has no shoes, I buy him a pair of shoes. The child who gets medicine says, 'That guy is always getting the shoes. I am getting the medicines.' That is because you are sick. When you are well you will get your shoes, too. A mother cannot be partial. A Master can

---

[235] *Role of the Master in Human Evolution*, p.178-180.

never be partial. Spiritual seekers must develop this impartiality. Preceptors must be totally dedicated to impartiality."[236]

A very good way of appreciating the degree of maturity and co-operation between preceptors is to observe 'preceptors' meetings':

- Do they take place often and regularly, or are they thought of at all?
- Are they usually attended by all members, or do some preceptors never come to the meetings, with or without various excuses?
- What is the general atmosphere during these meetings?
- What are the subjects that can be discussed and in what way?
- How efficient is the communication in the group? Are all participants active or only a few of them?
- What decisions can be taken and how rapidly?
- How do these meetings end, outwardly and inwardly?
- How are the activities, the work for the Mission distributed?

This last point, for example, has been mentioned during a preceptor's speech[237] as a complaint and a warning against a tendency among some senior preceptors to keep the Mission's work for themselves, so that only they would get the Master's blessings in return. I am only mentioning this to show how preceptors have to be vigilant, since they are particularly exposed to misuse of their relationships and

---

[236] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.108.

[237] Bombay, May 1991, by David Bolevice.

activities in the Mission. This may happen by an excess of avidity or possessiveness or because of their perfectionism.

Perfectionism, as psychology teaches us, very often hides arrogance, pride, fear and insecurity, lack of confidence in oneself and others, and leads to a compulsive need for controlling everything and others.

But preceptors may also misbehave by omission, i.e., refusal to co-operate.

"Remember there are two aspects, as they say: sins of commission and omission. When we work, we have to be forgiven for the mistakes that we make in doing work. If you are afraid of committing mistakes and don't work at all, you have to be forgiven for your laziness [he chuckles] and idleness, also.

"No person can earn the Master's pleasure or his respect by remaining idle, because it is a breach of faith and a breach of trust that we have accepted work which we are not doing. It is better to make mistakes in working, because at least then the Master says, 'Good, at least he is working.' Master told me, 'I have never expected results from preceptors. I only want them to work."[238]

Of course, the more some of the preceptors are involved in the responsibilities of the Mission, the more aware they must be of avoiding different types of corruption. As Chariji mentioned in his famous speech about Discipline, in Chittoor, 31 December 1984:

"Everything flows from the top. The river flows from the top, Grace flows from the top, corruption also comes from the top."[239]

"In order to avoid such pitfalls,

"Preceptors need to indulge in a lot of introspection."[240]

---

[238] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.25-26.

[239] *The Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.113.

[240] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.74.

Preceptors must replace their egoistic tendencies leading to power-seeking, which exists to some extent in many preceptors, by a brotherhood coming from the heart. Such a feeling preserves us from further damage as it circulates around:

"Well, I mean everything comes from the heart — if the heart is weak, we are weak. And this is the heart of Sahaj Marg. You see, the preceptors, the brotherhood of preceptors, is the heart of the Mission. And the heart of that heart is the Master. So everything ultimately hurts. So if we hurt ourselves, we hurt him. If we cheat ourselves, we cheat him. If we lie to ourselves, we lie to him. Please remember this."[241]

"So we have to be very careful about thought. Don't let unwanted thoughts enter at all. If they enter, disregard them. This is a technique which you all should be familiar with, because it has been repeated *ad nauseum*. When in meditation, if thoughts intrude, ignore them, treat them as uninvited guests. The first technique is to block such thoughts; second is, if they enter you, to treat them as uninvited guests so that they go. Then the next stages are beyond your control.

"This is the need for our brotherhood, not that we are overflowing with love for our brothers and sisters. I don't think a human heart exists which can do it. But we have to create it, because any thought which you create will inescapably, unavoidably affect you. It has to affect you, because it goes round, as I said day before yesterday, and comes back to you. You hate a person, that person hates you. You love somebody, they love you. Even it it's an animal; even if it's the most violent murderer."[242]

And how to build this necessary brotherhood? The answer is always the same:

"We speak different languages, we have different characters. What is it that is going to make us brothers? It is the inner oneness — because He who is in you is also in me and in her and there and in this, then we will be able to develop a brotherhood. Not because we see him and myself as brothers, but because what is in him and what is in me is the same. Two moneyed people, when they come together and they talk with great friendship of business and how to make more money, it is the money in their pocket or their bank accounts which make them speak. If they can develop a brotherhood of rich people just because they have money in

---

[241] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.66.

[242] Ibid., p.99.

their pockets, should we not be able to develop a brotherhood because we have the Master in our hearts?"[243]

"So you see, to be true preceptors we have to become *bhaktas* of the Lord. We have to become *dristas* in the sense that we see him everywhere. Then there will be no quarrels between us, among ourselves, because you cannot quarrel with yourself. How can you quarrel with yourself?"[244]

May this final quotation of Chari's be true for all abhyasi-preceptors:

"You see, being a preceptor is not certainly a bed of roses, but at the same time it is not a bed of thorns. It can be a bed of roses."[245]

---

[243] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.18.

[244] Ibid., p.17.

[245] Ibid., p.77.

— 12 —

From the Numerous Misuses to the Proper Use of the Master

"Let us learn to seek attention for growth, not for satisfaction."[246]

Most of us do not use the Master as we should, by surrendering to Him, if possible right from the beginning of our relationship with Him — a relationship supposed to become a complete identification through the process of mergence.[247]

As a consequence of our fear of surrender, we cannot avoid the transference phenomenon of our basic ambivalence of our emotions towards Him. We usually go from one psychological reaction to another, until possibly we are liberated from this bondage as a result of our practice and of His Grace.

The misuses described below are the most frequently encountered, or the most classical. They have been categorized here according to the five psychological consequences of our basic ambivalence, earlier described, namely our flight or refusal tendencies, our depression tendency, our rebellion, our resignation tendency, and our bargaining and negotiating tendencies.

---

[246] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.118.

[247] As far as the concept of Master is concerned, we shall normally consider here either the integration of a human being and his mastery as it is realised within the incarnated Master, or the 'Master within', the one we have or shall learn to find and feel in our own heart, as the essence of the Master.

Psychologically speaking, the stage of negotiating with the Master will be considered here as the starting point for a more mature or adult type of relationship with the Master, leading us to accept the Master. Acceptance of the Master, as a sixth psychological step, will allow us to describe the proper 'use'[248] of the Master, according to what may be found in spiritual literature, mainly the Sahaj Marg literature.

The Misuses of the Master

The root of all these misuses of the Master is our ambivalence. This ambivalence is presented here as the result of two opposing forces leading us to feel and behave in an ambivalent manner towards Him. On the one hand we have our egoistic fear of death, suffering, and changing. On the other hand we have an aspiration to change, to emulate Him, to love Him, but at the same time we transfer to Him, at least to some extent, our previous ways of loving other close ones. The problem is that most of the time we have learned to love others in an infantile possessive manner, which we also expect from the Master Himself. As Chariji said in South Africa, in 1993:

> "One who loves all does not mean one who loves each person individually. Here comes the problem of spirituality, you see — I have always said, 'A Master does not love anybody individually, cannot love anybody individually.'
>
> "So this fundamental problem of the Master, that he is not your Master. He is Himself a Master. He is not automatically your Master.
>
> "All the time we are mis-using Him, misquoting Him, claiming to be His devotees, His *bhaktas*."

Transferred to Him, this juxtaposition of our attraction to Him (rather than true Love), and of our fear of Reality and

---

[248] We are conscious that this term of 'use' may appear irreverent when applied to the Master.

realities is very well illustrated in the following passage, taken from a speech given by Chariji in Bangalore on the twenty-sixth of August, 1990:

> "Sometimes we find we are stuck with God; we are stuck with the Master, you see. We would like to get rid of the old fellow, but we can't. Why are we wanting to get rid of Him? Because He's too efficient. He's divinely efficient. He knows everything; He sees everything; He does everything. That hurts our ego. 'But, Sahib, I would like to do something for myself. I don't want to be dependent on the Guru.' Then why did you come here, you see?"

Our ambivalence may be further increased when our identification with the Master is neurotic or one of conflict. On the one hand, we want to dominate others (rather than to master ourselves), and on the other hand, we are afraid of this perverse tendency of ours. This is maybe the reason why Chariji said that Sahaj Marg is not a place for neurotics. We can consider it as a warning at least, and try to avoid remaining at that stage!

As a result of these opposite forces, we are going to look for different kinds of compromises, by approaching the Master without the necessary openness, innocence, and simplicity (let alone Love), either in our heart and/or through the human relationship we may have with the incarnated Master. The consequence is inevitable: we will be disqualifying Him in one way or another. Some of these ways are described below.

The Flight or Refusal Tendencies

What we are speaking about here is, of course, not total, otherwise the abhyasi would not stay, and perhaps not even start in the Mission. However, who has never tried to avoid the Master, either the incarnated one, or the inner Master, whether actively or passively, especially when one is angry or prey to guilt feelings for one reason or another? To ignore

the inner voice, or to avoid being close to Him physically, are two different manifestations of the same denial or flight movement. To think about other things when He is giving a talk or during meditation is another form of the same phenomenon of avoidance, which may be quite conscious or unconscious. In the latter case, it reveals itself as missed acts, as we described regarding the method. Conscious or unconscious, they may be considered in any case as missed occasions for meeting the Master, for creating or reinforcing our link with Him. Every one of us has certainly experienced personal examples of such expressions of fear which may take many forms.

The Depressed Tendency

The depression tendency, which has been called the devitalizing tendency in the misuses of the method, also reveals itself by sadness, with or without weeping, anxiety, or feelings of emptiness. In order to explain such reactions that we may experience, especially when we meet the incarnated Master, we must refer to the 'mirror effect', either in showing to us what we are not, as Chariji explained in Bombay,[249] or in showing directly to us what we are at the present time. It is, of course, not very pleasant to be confronted by our misbehaviour and shortcomings, no matter through which of these two different mechanisms it may be. They have the same depressing effect: a reaction of our hurt ego which is unable to continue to protect our self-esteem after such a clear confrontation. In other words, the defense mechanisms of our ego are no longer sufficient to mask reality as it is and, as a result, so-called negative emotions such as sadness appear.

---

[249] Speech of 6 May 1991.

To explain such a reaction, which we may experience sometimes very acutely, I have also suspected the Master, with His transmission, to have another psychological effect besides the mirror-effect, i.e., the 'homeopathy-like-effect' of temporarily aggravating our tendencies, maybe in order to help us to see them, face them, and let them go. But these reactions may also astonish or confuse us and may be used as further justification for other types of misuses which are added on, so that at the end we are dealing with a real mosaic of psychological reactions, a very well known finding in psychology.

Rebellion Against the Master

Instead of becoming sad or depressed when confronted with reality, we may tend to rebel against its source, i.e., the Master. Rebellion against the Master is also a very common manifestation of our ambivalence through the transference process of our infantile emotions, and its most frank type is disobedience.

Disobedience

If we have been disobedient to our parents, how are we going to avoid disobeying our Master inside and outside? This is almost impossible, though ideally one should not need to disobey when one is able to realise that one is disobeying oneself.

We are disobedient but usually less than courageous. In other words, it is obvious that most of the time we do not openly rebel but rather make, more or less, tricky compromises by means of lying to ourselves and to him, again, consciously or unconsciously.[250] If we do it mostly uncon-

---

[250] During an informal conversation (December 1992), Chariji explained that in Indian psychology total unconsciousness is not accepted. This view has of

sciously, we'll have to face this special uneasiness when confronted with different types of missed acts, like forgetting what He told us verbally or through revelations during a dream or a meditation, or forgetting basic acts of politeness when meeting our spiritual guide, etc.

Trying to Seduce the Master

Since seductive persons, in the sense of attractive persons, are praised for their attractiveness, they think they are permitted to become seducers or seductresses.[251] That comes into the realm of lying and untruthfulness, in order to find compromises and so-called personal adjustments, to avoid efforts and suffering.[252]

How we do it is again quite varied, sometimes very crude, sometimes sophisticated and powerful, especially if we are brilliant verbally and if we have a good sense of humour.[253] I think we may sometimes be even misled and encouraged by the laughing response of our spiritual guide, but we can never fool the Master, we can never corrupt Him. As Babuji puts it in His own special style:

---

course some consequences on our part of responsibility regarding all kinds of our behaviour.

[251] The distinction in French is more clear between the words *seduisant* (attractive) and *seducteur* (seducing).

[252] Chariji said (October 1991) during an informal talk, "It is rare that intelligence and will go together. That's why we have intelligent crooks..." It raises the question of the importance of will on our path, a subject relegated to another book.

[253] This remark doesn't constitute an attack against humour in general, which may be defined, according to Chögyam Trungpa, as the capacity of "seeing both poles of a situation as they are, from an aerial point of view" [196,p.113]. What is questioned here is the tendency to constantly try "to make fun of things, to find humour in every corner, every crack" [idem, p.114], in other words to utilize humour defensively and not as a tool to help liberate us, as Masters do so... masterfully!

"Flattery is harmful both to the flatterer and to the flattered. A king, having all flatterers about him, is sure to come to harm on that account. He must therefore apply stringent methods to stop this evil. Nature too may have possibly adopted a course of action for the purpose. The result shall however come to light by itself in due course."[254]

In order to avoid dwelling too much on this extremely rich and hot subject of lying, let us generalize as follows: each time we dissimulate, each time we dramatize, each time we exaggerate, each time we minimize, each time we vulgarize, each time we seduce, each time we defend ourselves consciously or unconsciously, we are in fact lying to ourselves and to our Self. Even when we are seduced or fascinated by one aspect of the Master with which we tend to identify, we are, of course, also lying to ourselves, because we take the part for the whole. This, in order to satisfy some conscious or unconscious desire, consisting most of the time of getting His various blessings or powers and in avoiding His suffering and His numerous duties. Maybe the following passage can illustrate this tendency of ours:

"What is the need for me to ask? We do not ask our mothers for food; the mother calls us and gives us food. She says, 'Come here, it is time to eat.' Can God be less kind, less knowing of our needs? Then where is the need to ask? If the need to ask is not there, then why are we asking? The obvious answer is, we do not know He is a Master. We are only saying 'Master, Master.' In our hearts, in our heads, we do not understand, we do not accept."[255]

Direct and Indirect Attacks Against the Master

Of course, we feel more or less deceived and frustrated when this game of seduction is over, i.e., when the Master has cut it down in order to help us grow. As a result we may take an illusion of revenge by starting to judge the Master, to disqualify him, to threaten him, even to attack him, again in

---

[254] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.65.

[255] *Principles of Sahaj Marg* , vol. VII, p.188.

innumerable forms. I think that if we start to realise what we are doing, we can understand the interceding words of Jesus to his Father, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." But suppose we do know what we are doing? Well, let us withdraw from this risky subject by quoting a recent sentence of Chari:

> "I am like a pin-cushion; you cannot avoid hurting me."[256]

Of course, most of our attacks against the Master are not so gross. Three are very common and justify the reference to a pin-cushion:

1. Arguing with the Master inside or with the living Master. This is our ego fighting against the Self, or our limited knowledge contesting real wisdom, partial truth pitting itself against Reality. Thus, we create a barrier to his teaching, as we stand in the way of his patient attempt to help us, at the cost of 'pinpricking' him.
2. Disqualifying him is a more sophisticated way of attacking him, a strategy we will define here according to its etymological sense, i.e., removing his sacred qualities by treating him with undue familiarity, as if he were just another of our mundane acquaintances.
3. Judging the Master: this tendency is so deeply rooted in us, in our education, that we usually do it as a reflex, or automatic defense mechanism.[257] It includes criticism, a sport which we often combine with seducing and uniting in coalitions, as we saw when discussing perverting tendencies in the Mission. Judging the Master is perhaps the height of arrogance.

---

[256] Informal conversations, Madras, 9 August 1991.

[257] This mechanism is called 'identification with the aggressor' in the Freudian psychoanalytical literature. In other words, we do to others what has been done to us.

"So you see how arrogant we are when we question the Master's dictates, when we disobey him, when we choose to rebel against the orders that he gives. Exercise of your judgment in the presence of the Master is an act of disobedience, and an act of betrayal. So yesterday when I said, 'Judge not, that you shall not be judged,' that was *vis-à-vis* yourself. Don't judge because you are liable to be judged in turn. Today I go one step higher, or several steps higher, and say if you judge it is an act of betrayal, because you assume a superiority over the Master whom you have accepted as the Master. And in that lies the act of betrayal.

"Betrayal does not mean, you know, putting a knife in the back of the Master, or handing him over to the police. That is a stupid betrayal, a senseless betrayal. But these betrayals are by people who claim to be his devotees, who love him, who follow him and who often say, 'I will follow you till the very end.' And with the first order, there is betrayal."[258]

Although, he did not judge us:

"Understand that you are also yourselves culpable in so many ways that many of you have been afraid of going before our Master because you were afraid of being judged by him. We started going to him when we found even if he had judged he did not speak about it, he did not chastise us for it, he did not curse us for it. Therefore we began to have confidence in him and later on began to love him because here was a Master who did not ever judge us. He did not judge us because he did not need to judge us. He knew before we came what we are. He knew that because, by and large, all human beings are the same. Also, he knew it was his job to correct, not to judge. It was his job to reform us, to elevate us, to take us to our goal."[259]

How can we diminish, if not suppress, this very strong habit we have, our propensity to judge?[260] Instead of saying, "Oh, he is so moralistic anyway...," we could switch to, "Today I found him very moralistic...," without 'anyway',

---

[258] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.55.

[259] Ibid., p.24.

[260] We generally allow ourselves to do so on the pretense of having been judged ourselves so often. But we don't usually realise that we use this already mentioned defense mechanism called 'identification with the aggressor', hence emulating our persecutors and pretending to denounce them at the same time.

and we will notice that this taking responsibility for our feeling and not for deciding how he is, is going to lead us to more lucidity rather than adding one lie to another lie, or one projection to another. In fact, if we take responsibility for feeling him to be moralistic, we open the door to asking ourselves why we feel that, as well as allowing another to share with us his own feeling that may help us.

In order to help us to be healed of this widespread 'judging-disease', we should first realise that by judging the Master, or anyone else, we are judging ourselves, because when we judge, it is always under an emotional pressure, for example jealousy, which is the main root of criticism. If we remember our explanation of projective activities (of attributing to others what we are or feel), we cannot avoid facing the fact that when judging we are in fact mistreating both others and ourselves, and that is not only harmful, it is stupid. Since we don't want to remain stupid, why not just let this habit go straight away, without resignation.

Resignation

This reaction is usually a combination of depressive reaction and rebellion. It is a more silent and passive way of 'participating-with-disapprobation-and-sadness', whether towards the Master inside, the incarnated Master, or towards other people in whom we should see the Master. In other words, it constitutes a kind of blockage, a form of stagnation, that may evolve either into rebellion or depression from which stages resignation emanates. This may evolve progressively into a state of acceptance through the inner work we call in psychology the mourning process. Here it is the process of mourning for ourselves, which may favourably lead to acceptance of Him 'in us', which may later on lead to surrender to Him. But as long as this state of resignation prevails, the abhyasi is not able to show any kind of

commitment to the Master, hence receiving no significant assistance.[261]

Bargaining and Negotiating

Two ways of relating to the Master because they refer to different stages of maturity are bargaining and negotiating:

Bargaining with the Master

When speaking of seducing behaviour, we mentioned this search for compromises, for personal adjustments, if possible at the lowest cost of suffering. This is bargaining. Honesty is not yet present. There is only a partial acceptance of reality, in the sense that we are now obliged to make compromises, but with a maximum protection of our egoistic desires. So many things can be bargained for with the Master inside and/or with the incarnated Master.

Usually when we speak of bargaining, we think of money, what we give, what we take, how to avoid being taken advantage of, how to try to take advantage of someone. But here what we bargain with is always our spiritual evolution, i.e., something priceless, which can lead us beyond time and space, against measurable and perishable advantages of mind and body. So long as we are not fully convinced that this so-called spiritual evolution is not just emptiness and vanity, it is quite understandable that we try to bargain as much as possible, in order to keep as many possible pleasures and materialistic attachments.[262]

---

[261] According to the speech given by Chariji in Bombay, 7 May 1991.

[262] Chögyam Trungpa has written a very interesting book on this subject, whose suggestive title is *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, as has already been mentioned [196].

Once more we see our ambivalence and our lying tendency at work with the disturbing spiritual result being that we usually don't accept the direct consequences of our bargaining as okay. In fact, since bargaining, as we defined it, is not an honest transaction, we add to the confusion in thinking that it is. However, we suppose Master is going to act according to the egoistic wishes we have unilaterally put into the deal by continuing to protect us from suffering and also granting us our spiritual salvation. But, of course, it does not work in reality, since the Master (inside and outside) is not confused between a bargain and an honest transaction, called here negotiation. As a result, sooner or later, the bargainer feels dissatisfaction.

Bargaining with the Master is an attempt to take advantage of Him to please some tendencies of our ego, to fulfill some desires, instead of serving Him. We wait for something, usually for something extraordinary to feed our ego with spiritual experiences, as nicely explained by Chögyam Trungpa, a Buddhist lama:

"This period of waiting on your part, trying to get over something, is in itself wrong, because a waiting period means so much concentration into yourself, working inward rather than working outward. There is a tendency towards centralization and there is the notion of the 'big deal' involved with your psychology, your state of mind. That is what is wrong."[263]

"You would like to prove to yourself that such miracles do exist, because you would like to be sure that you are on the side of the guru, the side of the doctrine, the side of the miracles, sure that what you are doing is safe and powerful, sensational in fact, sure that you are on the side of the 'goodies'. You would like to be one of those few people who have done something fantastic, extraordinary, super-extraordinary, one of the people who turned the world upside-down: 'I actually thought that I was standing on the floor, but I found myself standing on the ceiling!' The sudden flush of the meeting with the spiritual friend, the meeting of the

---

[263] *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, Shambhala Dragon Editions, 1987, p.96.

two minds, is definitely real, a genuine experience, quite sensational, a miracle in fact. Perhaps we are not quite absolutely sure, but certainly such a miracle must mean that we are on to something, that we have found the true way at last.

"Such intense attempts to prove to ourselves that what we are doing is right indicate a very introverted state of mind; one is very aware of oneself and the state of one's being. We feel that we are a minority and that we are doing something very extraordinary, that we are different from everyone else."[264]

Let us conclude this section on bargaining with the Master with a very illustrative passage from Chari's speech called 'Seeing the Master', showing our tendencies to create various misconceptions like dividing Him in pieces, in order to take what our ego wants to take, as a primitive fear reaction leading to bargaining:

"There are two problems in seeing the Master, maybe even three, I don't know. The first one is, we want a human Master who will be sympathetic to our faults, and almost like us, with all the human frailties, weaknesses, but with all the strengths necessary to take us up. I think this is the first problem, that we would like the Master to be human, because otherwise we may find it difficult to follow him, you see. So we like to retain him as a human being, and perhaps this is one reason why we talk of a Master and his power, dividing him and his qualities whereas, for me, it is one and the same thing. I cannot think of a Master without his powers. It is like saying there is a mango without mango-ness in it, or lime without lime-ness in it. The thing is what it is because of the qualities that it possesses. So, how can a Master not have whatever he should have? So when we artificially separate the two things, we want the man as he is, and we want his powers separately, so that we can love the man without being afraid of his powers, and use his powers without loving the man, both come.

"So, this separation we create artificially, and it is very common. Like a person would like to marry a millionaire for his money rather than for the person. Now there it is possible, because a man and his money are not the same thing, or a man and his house, they can be separated. But a Master and his mastery, how can they be separated? Now most of us, when we go to the Master, we want his mastery to work for us, and we want him to remain very much the human being, so that we can accept

---

[264] Ibid, p.92.

the combination of the two. We are blocking our own capacities by this fear that we introduce into the picture, and then of course we create so many rational excuses for this; like one girl said Babuji was so small and fragile, another person says Babuji had a beard, these are all excuses which our intellect gives us for continuing to be as we are.

"The other problem is, if you accept his mastery, divinity, whatever it is, totally, the fear comes, 'What will I do when his physical form disappears?' as happened when Babuji passed away. This is the second reason, why we would like him to be permanently human, without the possibility of being an abstract Master. Because it is possible to accept an ordinary human being, whether he be master or not, but to accept and love an abstraction which has taken a form for a few days, few months, few years, we put ourselves in the position of children who love soap-bubbles, very nice, lots of beautiful colours, but we don't know which keeps us away from the Master. We are always afraid to love a thing which we may not have in the future. So this is the second barrier!

"I don't know if there is a third one, which may be quite likely, you see, that if we accept him totally, with devotion and love, the possibility of our self being divinised is enhanced and we don't want to lose ourselves! We want to remain human beings. 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' So, you see, this is the last and most difficult problem to overcome, because we may lose him, it's okay, it may not be such a big tragedy after all, you see, but to lose myself... And what is it that I am going to become? Will I be able to still retain my human qualities?"[265]

Negotiating with the Master

When we are able to start serious negotiations with our Master, it can be a crucial transition to another type of relationship with the Master, sometimes even the end of our ambivalence: the transaction is honest, the purpose is no longer to cheat the Master. In other words, serious negotiations may constitute the intermediary step of this lengthy process of mourning, leading to acceptance of the Master.[266]

It is lengthy because the ego must receive compensations, or temporary compensatory illusions for its conces-

---

[265] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.199-200.

[266] We should, of course, not confuse acceptance, as a partial progressive process, with surrender, as a total, immediate, and definitive phenomenon.

sions, step by step. As far as I am concerned, for example, my participation as a speaker in the Sahaj Marg Research Institute may be understood as such a temporary compensation for my ego, in the sense of enhancing the value, or re-enhancing the value of Ferdinand.

But if this process of negotiating is dynamic enough, the demands of the ego are decreasing step by step, because in the meantime the ego is submitted to a refining process which makes it lose more and more of its previous greed. In other words, when we are able to seriously negotiate with the Master, it is the sign of our capacity to get off the emotional level of transactions with Him, hence out of all these distortions, misrepresentations, and prejudices we have maintained, if not cherished, in ourselves, and later on, transferred to both the inner Master and the incarnated one. In short, truly, honestly, negotiating with the Master shows our coming of age — or maturity!

According to my observations so far, I must conclude this section on our multiple misuses of the method, the Mission and the Master by stating that, for most of us who have not surrendered right away to the Master, we have to go on the long path through all the different psychological stages described above, with all the risks of stagnation at each stage, until we negotiate seriously with our Self, with our Master inside, maybe also with the incarnated Master, who is of course a perfect negotiator, too.

Then a new progression in the blocked spiritual path may start up, through the proper use of the Master, i.e., the spiritual stages of obeying Him, emulating Him, accepting Him, and in the end surrendering to Him, from which stage it becomes, as we all know, His exclusive business.

The Proper Use of the Master

"Don't think you are different from me."[267]

As we already have said, speaking of the 'use' of the Master may be considered irreverent, and speaking of the proper use of Him pretentious. But let us proceed in this direction as a response to all these misuses of the Master that have been described so far.

- We will show how the Sahaj Marg practice is in itself a proper use of the Master.
- We will describe the usual steps leading to a proper use of the Master in the sense of a progression along the path.
- Some particularly important and necessary spiritual qualities or attitudes towards the Master will be illustrated by selected passages found in Sahaj Marg literature.

Sahaj Marg Sadhana as a Proper Use of the Master

The Master being considered as the Goal, one may state that our sadhana as a whole, and all its parts, are preparing us for, or leading us to, a proper use of the Master. Let us verify whether this statement is true for the most important components of our sadhana:

- *The prayer*: in the Sahaj Marg prayer, since we assume that He is the real Goal of human life, we are aspiring to Him, no further discussion is necessary. In the nine p.m. prayer, we assume that true love, devotion and faith are increasing in our brothers' and sisters' hearts, and again, no one will contest that these ingredients are a proper way of relating to the Master.

---

[267] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.116

- During our *daily cleaning,* by replacing our impressions by the divine current coming directly from Master's heart, we are certainly using Master's grace at its best.
- During our *meditation,* we are at least recreating or reinforcing the connection with Him. Since we think of the divine light in our hearts, we go once more in His direction, since divine light represents the nothingness, or the Centre, and since we tend to become what we meditate upon.
- *Remembrance* is, of course, a proper use at its best, since we train ourselves to feel His presence in us, as often as possible up to the point of a constant state, as well as to behave as He would behave in the situations we face in our daily life.

In short, it is not surprising to verify that all the classic elements of our sadhana tend to permit the best possible use of the Master.

Positive suggestions may be used in the same direction, either self-directed or directed to others. For example, we may suggest becoming more and more like Him, becoming able to surrender or, more modestly, to increase our confidence in the Master, in order to be able to accept Him in our hearts, hence to become sincere[268] abhyasis, as a first step along the necessary progression we have to accomplish for a proper use.

---

[268] Etymologically, sincere comes from its Latin root *sincerus*, meaning pure, upright, natural (Sahaj!). *Sem* means one, unity, and the second part of the word is perhaps related to *crescere* — to grow. Hence the original term would mean in one go, straight-growing.

Our Progression Towards a Proper Use of the Master

If we continue to progress through the long way of the five previous psychological steps as the roots of our misuses of the Master, we may comfort ourselves and state that the sixth of these stages, namely acceptance of the Master, ends this disease called ambivalence, hence our fear and our confusion. In accepting him, we no longer need to feel separated from an exterior Master, admiring him, evaluating him, ignoring him, mistrusting him, when not struggling with him. As a consequence, we are now ready to accept a permanent connection with Him, to develop confidence in him, up to the point of experiencing faith in him. We are now also able to obey him, to start loving him and to open ourselves more and more in the direction of surrender.

We shall come back later to these spiritual qualities of obedience, faith, love, and surrender, but let us first repeat that accepting the Master means accepting both the essence of the Guru and his incarnation, i.e., all his qualities as a whole. Otherwise the ego is going to try to take advantage of this partial acceptance in one way or another, as in the following dialogue:

Q: Do you think it is possible to begin to see what is, to see yourself as you are, without a teacher?

A: I do not think it is possible at all. You have to have a spiritual friend in order to surrender and completely open yourself.

Q: Is it absolutely necessary that the spiritual friend be a living human being?

A: Yes. Any other 'being' with whom you might think yourself communicating would be imaginary.

Q: Would the teachings of Christ in themselves be a spiritual friend?

A: I would not say so. That is an imaginary situation. It is the same with any teachings; they do not have to be the teachings of Christ necessarily.

The problem is that we can interpret them ourselves. That is the whole point: written teachings are always open to the interpretation of ego.[269]

In order to avoid partial acceptance, leading to all possible kinds of aberrations, let us consider Chari's advice to put Him in our hearts:

"There is only one way: attach yourself, your heart, with the Master. Any other way will not work.

"So, let us have this fixed firmly in our hearts, because that is the safe place for the human being, that is where we keep all our precious things. That is where we say, 'He is here.' When you love somebody, you don't say, 'He is here.' [pointing to the head] You say, 'He is here.' [pointing to the heart] So that is where the Master must be. And if He is there, He is always with us. He becomes our inner guide, and the Goal is something now which is inside ourselves, and that is one reason why we can achieve it sitting where we are, closing our eyes and meditating inside. Because, you know, in all the religious ways, you have to go outside, walk up hills, walk up mountains, go on pilgrimages. But here, the whole journey, the voyage is done inside ourselves. He is there, He is calling us from inside and, in some miraculous way, we go inside ourselves and follow Him inside ourselves. And the deeper we go in, the quicker we find, and when we reach the deepest level of our being, I think Master creates that miracle which we find again and again in nature, but about which I don't think any of you have ever thought - the life in the centre of the seed. How did it get there? You know, it's not like making hazelnut chocolates, that you have a nut and then you cover it with chocolate. How does nature put life in the middle of things without cutting open anything? This miracle happens to us. The life that we put into ourselves is the spiritual life of the Master when we put Him in our hearts by an act of acceptance, by an act of surrender. He becomes the seed which we sow in our own hearts. And then from inside, He germinates, He flowers. And that is us, we become the flowers coming out of the seed that he puts into us."[270]

In illustration of this necessary progression, some passages are presented here, showing different modalities of

---

[269] *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*. Shambhala Dragon Editions, 1987, p.87-88.

[270] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.286, 288-289.

approaching the Master (up to mergence) as well as the consequences of these different stages:

"First we come to the Master to have a Master. In the beginning we don't even know what a Master can do for us, or what we should expect from the Master. I think it takes some time, some abhyas, before we really understand what is the real connection between a Master and his disciple and what is to be done in that association. At this stage it only begins, you can say some purposeful relationship begins, but still it is something of giving and taking; and this stage, unfortunately, can last all your life, all the life of an abhyasi, and in the case of most abhyasis that's what happens. The abhyasi is only thinking of his progress and the regions, and the problems and how to solve them. Of course, the Master, being a merciful Master, gives all these things. There may be a few cases, the fortunate abhyasis, who begin to love the Master and go to the Master only because they love Him. And as that love grows, slowly they begin to want to become like Him whom they love. We can say that when this longing comes, to be like Him, then the possibility of merger becomes active. So you see, if it is depending on love, we have to love and then we have to want to merge and therefore it is our work — the Master cannot help. So love, the beginning of love, makes everything possible, and when that love is total and we want to be like Him in every way, then merger happens — it is not something we do — it happens of itself."[271]

"We come as beggars, as sufferers, as pleaders, in the sense that we are pleading for something all the time. Now we must become friends. Then what? Perhaps trustees, trustworthy companions, finally lovers."[272]

"How to prepare ourselves? The lowest level is, of course, becoming an abhyasi. I enroll myself, take my three sittings, put on the badge, and I am an abhyasi. But that is only the first step. If you stop there, and become petrified there, you remain a statue on the first step of the temple. If you progress a little, adopt the practice, with perhaps many differences of opinion, many doubts, perhaps you will climb up to the second step. There you will become petrified and become the statue on the second step.

"You proceed a little further, put your heart into the practice, but yet you remain as a beggar; on the third step you will be petrified, and now you will be holding out a beggar's bowl in your hand, and there is a new statue once more. But you stop begging, go to the next level and you become a friend, but there you stop, you're just a friend and nothing

---

[271] *The Fruit of the Tree*, p.76-77.

[272] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.178.

more. There you are petrified as a friend. Smiling countenance, good clothes he has given you, well nourished by the food he has given you, but nevertheless only a friend. He is my friend, I can never be his friend. This must be remembered. Because he can give his life for me, I can never give my life for him. I have my life to distribute to so many people: my beloved, my lovers, my girlfriends, my boyfriends, my children, my uncles and aunts; also to those whom I hate profoundly, I have to give so many things back, my hatred, my violence, my ignorance.

"So until I can give my life for my Master, I have no right to call myself a friend. You know, friendship is not always reciprocal, perhaps never reciprocal. Therefore it is absurd, it is irreverent, to say you are a friend of the Master. Yes, he is your friend, but you are not his friend. So you see, we can never be friends in that sense. He treats me as a friend, because he can give his life for me. When I can give my life for him, without a moment's thought, then I can claim that friendship for myself.

"So we have to go beyond that, you see, it must be a momentary thing, 'Yes, he is my friend. I am his friend, too.'...

"Then we have to become that beautiful thing, one who loves, and he keeps climbing up the stairs. This I believe is also the portraiture that is employed in Hindu temples when you find statues on both sides of the steps leading up to a temple. Perhaps! I don't know what they meant but this is the meaning that I derive, that here are these poor people, seekers who came seeking not for what he could give, but for what they wanted, and each one stopped at the level of his aspiration to take up life again when the Divine touch shall animate them afresh.

"And once you are able to adore him, and see him as the very divine, the divine is my — he treats me as his friend but to me he is always the divine — at that stage you come to the portal of his immense presence, of his noble presence. It is a long way, but it is also very short. All long ways are short; and short-cuts are very often long ways."[273]

"So you see, that respect when it comes, and the love when it comes, leads to the adoration of which I was speaking to you about yesterday. So step by step, if you do not progress in your association with your Master, the teaching you accept from him will also remain at the level in which you are in your association with him. When you come as a beggar, and when you read as a beggar, you will only see how you can be a better beggar. When you are a friend, and you read his literature as a friend, accept his teaching as a friend, you will still only accept it as a friend, at the level of friendship; when you love him, and read his teaching and accept his teaching with love, you will now see it with the eyes of a lover;

---

[273] Ibid, p.180-181.

and when you become one who adores him, a *bhakta*, then comes a new manifestation of all these things, you see. The whole thing changes. Now you are no longer something to be played with, you are a devotee of the Lord. In the Sufi tradition they have many appellations, many terms for these things. Not everybody can be a disciple.

"So we have to refine not only our behaviour and our character, but also our intake, physical, mental, not only our morality, but we have to refine ourselves, so that we are able to understand the teaching at the different levels in which it is given."[274]

Of course, this progression may be done at different speeds, preferably without delay:

"Now, there was some talk of new abhyasis. When I went to my Master in March 1964, I never felt I was new or old or anything. When a child is born — you are many women here — when you have a baby, does the baby feel it is new in its mother's hands? And does it feel that it has to get used to the mother? Or does the mother feel, 'This is a new baby, I must get accustomed to the baby?' I never felt like that. You know, I felt as if I was going home to my Master. And therefore, you know, I could just go and sit with him, talk with him, no difference, right from the beginning. Other people usually take a few years to come nearer and nearer and nearer the Master. It is like lovers, you know, who say, 'You be at the north end of the lane, I'll be at the south end of the lane. Tomorrow we will each advance one metre, next week each another metre and ultimately on Christmas day, we will come close enough where we can kiss.' Crazy love, crazy lovers!...

"Same thing with the Master because, essentially, the relationship between a master and a disciple is a love affair, at the highest level. So there should be no shyness, holding back, you know, all this nonsense. So... you don't mind if I say what the conclusion is, that where there is hesitation, and all this reserve about coming to the Master, there is no love."[275]

Useful and Necessary Behaviour, Attitude, and Spiritual Qualities for a Proper Use of our Master

The above quotations have already introduced and described some of the necessary qualities required from true

---

[274] Ibid, p.179.

[275] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.129-130.

seekers in order to attain Him as their Goal, mainly love and adoration. It is not surprising to encounter here such overlapping between these necessary qualities and stages we pass through, since all these positive impulses described so far in the direction of the Master start resonating in us, creating a 'virtuous circle',[276] pushing us forward step by step, closer and closer to our Goal, namely Him once again.

Obedience

One of these necessary spiritual qualities is obedience to the Master, which constitutes a very good test of our real level of approach to Him, because it is rather difficult to fool ourselves with our obedience to Him, as we may fool ourselves, for instance, with our love or alleged love for Him. It is one of the reasons why this quality (with discipline) so easily reveals our ambivalence, although obedience truly liberates us, prepares us to surrender, and reflects our love for Him:

"You have to do what the Guru asks you to do if you accept him, and not argue with him. One never argues with the Master — on any subject. Obedience is the test of an abhyasi. The second thing is: he is still a Master, he is not yet God to you. In fact, to many persons, he is not even a Master, he is another human being, you see. So first you have to accept him as a human guide and accept his advice and do what he says. If this step is undertaken successfully, there comes the possibility of seeing him as your Master. At that stage begins your real spiritual practice. Till then it is all mechanical, you see. Now when he has become your Master, you start your spiritual practice in right earnest. Now he is the Master, and I am his servant. And with this attitude when we proceed on our spiritual path, devotion grows, love grows and finally when we are able to see him as nothing different from the God that is within me, then we have the right and the authority to say he is God."[277]

---

[276] Virtuous circle is used here to show the contrast with vicious circle, but virtuous helix, or 'moving helix' would be a better expression for showing the dynamic progression towards Him.

[277] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.56-57

"Sages have classified the disciples under two main heads, the *manamata* and the *gurumata*. The former are those who approach the guru with some particular worldly end in view such as relief from worldly misery, desire for wealth, etc. They submit to him only so long as they are hopeful in the achievement of their desires. When they meet disappointment in this respect they are off. For such disciples the question of obedience or submission even does not arise, what to say of surrender. *Gurumata* disciples are those who obey the commands of the Master in all matters and try to submit to his will in all possible ways. Submission begins with obedience. When we are deeply impressed by the great powers of a Master of higher attainments in spirituality, we feel inwardly inclined to follow his bidding. But often the effect remains upon us only when we are in his presence, and when we are away we become unmindful of him. Repeated association with him for some time brings us in closer touch with the great soul, and his supremacy begins to be established in our heart. We accept him as our guide in all matters pertaining to our spiritual advancement. The result is that we remember him frequently. When we are perfectly convinced of his superior capabilities, only then our submission in true sense begins. We go on with it and practise as we are directed. We think of pleasing him by our actions. The idea of right or wrong, too, begins to assume prominence in our heart and we feel inclined to refrain from evil. We consequently adopt the line of virtue so that we might be able to please our great Master. It is our primary motive, for we wish to be saved from the miseries of the next life.

"But, so far, we reserve to ourselves the right of discretion and are, therefore, responsible for all our actions whether good or bad. At a higher stage of self-surrender such a discretionary power becomes almost extinct and a man does everything thinking it to be his Master's will. The question of right or wrong does not at all arise in his mind, or it becomes absolutely certain that by following his Master's will, he is doing the only right thing and he does nothing but the right, feeling it to be his Master's will."[278]

"So you see here again, even possessing all these positive attributes of character, personality, inner self, the one thing which can help us and save us from every single mistake that we can possibly commit, is obedience. If he says, 'Do it,' you do it. He takes the responsibility. If he says, 'Don't do it,' don't do it. Again the responsibility is his. There are no more sins of commission and omission. There are only virtues of commission and omission. You see at one stroke we become virtuous, both in the doing and in the not doing, because we are obedient.

---

[278] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. I, p.89-91.

"Obedience, in the beginning, is a very difficult thing because it means subservience of our ego, subjugation of our ego, to a superior person. Therefore the ego rebels. Disobedience always comes by a rebellion of the ego. But people forget that when you are obedient you have no more responsibility for anything that you do, or don't do, under his orders. It is, I think, in my opinion, this is the *mukti* for which we are all, you know, clamouring. It is the liberation from the world. When I can live and exist, and do and not do, according to his wishes and be totally free of every atom of responsibility, what more can you expect by way of liberation? This is liberation while I am alive — I assume. And I'm convinced in myself that this is *jivan mukti*...

"So it becomes so utterly easy and simple. Love Him, follow Him, obey Him. The three are interrelated. We won't follow somebody we cannot love. We can obey people who force us to obey, but there is always inner rebellion. Therefore even great army commanders are subject to coups, you know, and they are removed or thrown away or killed. But in a love-oriented obedience there is no rebellion, there is no anguish, there is no subjugation of the ego, because we have transferred it to him and said, 'This is yours. Keep it.'

"So you see at one stroke: loving him, obeying him, following him, our responsibility doesn't exist anymore to anybody. He looks after us as he looks after everybody else."[279]

Work, Service, and Devotion

As a direct consequence of obedience to Him, or of our love for Him, comes our willingness to work for Him which may lead us later on to serve Him when we really put our heart in it, as a sign of our devotion, which includes love, also. Then we have become real *bhaktas* of the Master, a stage which is not so easy to attain. These different points are described and explained in the following passages:

"Very often people ask, 'If I am to think of the Master, or remember him all the time, who will do my work?' This is what happens: you are now like a machine, you love the Master and your body does the work automatically and because the Master is working through you, the work is as he wants it to be, please remember carefully, it is as he wants it to be. You cannot say it is perfect, you cannot say it is good, you also

---

[279] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.57-59.

cannot say it is bad. It is what it has to be. That is the way of Nature, you see...

"So we work, but we don't work. If the preceptor remembers this and works with this attitude, the work will be masterly. So please remember this. For preceptors, I say this especially for their spiritual work, but it applies to all of us. When you cook, think the Master is there; when you are teaching in the school, think the Master is there. You will find you can do a lot of work, there is no tiredness, there is no disappointment, there is no frustration; because he is doing the work, the result is his."[280]

"There are three steps in our evolution: when we come to the Master, we come as human beings, work as human beings with human aspirations. In the second step, if we are able to do the meditation and achieve constant remembrance, we remain human beings, but work, or permit the Master to work through us and the aspiration is divinisation. If this is effectively done, the third and final stage, the culminating stage comes when we are divinised beings working as divine beings with no more aspiration, except what God can possibly have, which is nothing, you see. So, this is the miracle of the Sahaj Marg teaching: its approach to work on ourselves and on the rest of existence...

Now, look at His benevolence. He gives so many of us work, but he is observing all of us simultaneously, because after all it is his work we are doing and he wants to make sure we do it correctly. Otherwise he has to waste time doing it all over again. So, from his level as the Master, the Divine Being, he has to watch every one of us to whom he has entrusted his work. And we are, you know, human beings subject to the vagaries of human nature. Nobody can say when we are working, which means he has to watch us twenty-four hours of the day. See what an enormous benefit we get when we work for him. He has to look after us twenty-four hours for his interest, but protecting my interest at the same time. What a benefit we get...

"Now, this should be our attitude to the Master's work. What else should we be thinking about, except his work? Because I have shown you that he is watching us twenty-four hours of the day to protect his work. In the process, he protects us. Now, if a person is looking after me twenty-four hours of the day, is he going to forget to give me my food and my water and my clothes? So, what should I really be worried about, except his work? Because the more perfectly I do it, the more devotedly I do it, the more continuously I do it, the more he looks after me."[281]

---

[280] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.228-229

[281] Ibid, p.46-48.

"...when we are devoted we must serve, and if we serve, it must be with devotion. So perhaps, all these stories are only highlighting the two extremes, and leaving it to our individual genius to bring about a reconciliation between the two attitudes, and fuse them together to result in an individual who is capable of both.

"I think this can be seen from my Master's life. I think he was at the summit of devotion to his Master, but that did not prevent him from becoming totally service-oriented towards humanity. So in him, we find that fusion of devotion, total devotion with total dedication to service. The only difference I can find is that both Martha and Mary are towards Christ. One devoted to Christ, the other serving Christ. But when eventually we are able to fuse the two attitudes into one, the devotion is towards the higher and the service pointed down towards those who need it. But it is not really a difference, because even though he serves humanity, it is his Master that he serves.

"So when this fusion happens, the devotion for the Master makes us serve the Master by serving his devotees. To serve the Master is all right, but if the Master prefers that you serve his devotees, our devotion must permit that, because it is too easy to say, 'I will serve only the Master and nobody else.' That is what every dog does, but we have to be a little bit more than that. That is why one who is devoted to the Master, a Mary for instance, must be willing to become a Martha and leave the Master, and even go far away to serve the Master by serving those whom he wants us to serve. Otherwise, we would be like Mary sitting at the Master's feet, or like Martha, sitting in the kitchen. Here, we have to be mentally with the Master, and perhaps physically very very far away, and yet bring about a fusion of the two attitudes."[282]

"It is easier to get from the Master through service than through devotion, love. Who knows what is devotion? Who knows what is love? I have said again and again, love is not so easy as we think. It is something which we have to achieve. So this nonsense of falling in love at first sight — it's ridiculous. It is not petrol and fire that it catches fire at once. Crazy. So, it is easier through service. My Master was able to love his Master, and he never looked at another person, that's what he has written. But I don't have that ability, so I got through service. So what is the difference? Service is easier than loving; loving is a very difficult thing. Service is very easy. Put your heart and serve somebody, you automatically get his love and his obligation to you, and he has to give you whatever he has to give you. He has to give us, you see. But we

---

[282] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.190-191.

should not serve with the idea of getting something, that is one important thing. Then we become servants and we get only what a servant gets."[283]

"If the Master thinks that you have the willingness to serve, there is no question of capacity. If he gives you the work — a part of it, a minute portion of it — if we do that with dedication, with sincerity, with conscious alertness, we are able to worm our way into his heart through service. Forget love. Who is capable of love? The more we talk of love, the less we are able to love. Or, per contra, the less we are able to love the more we talk about it. One who loves will never speak of love. Here, you are able to worm your way into his heart without having to face this problem of how to love — through service. You earn his attention. That is, 'He is working for me, let me look after him, let me help him.' That bond between the two increases. It is not a bondage, it is a bond. There is no slave and master any more. There are two people working together. It is a symbiotic relationship."[284]

"Serve humanity without consciousness of being a servant. We are not servants. Babuji said, 'Service without servility.' We serve, but not as servants. We serve because it is our nature to serve. We serve because the Master says serve. We serve with, shall we say, pride in the Master, and therefore, we serve Him, though we are serving you. Now again you find this operation: that the person served is not the person apparently served, but is the person who doesn't need my service at all — my Master."[285]

Faith and Openness

Working for Him, doing our practice, trying to change our behaviour and character, all this requires a large amount of confidence in the Master, culminating in faith:

"You see, faith is like chastity; you cannot say a woman is ten percent chaste. Either a woman is chaste or not chaste. Similarly you are faithful or not faithful. There can be no, 'I am half faithful, sir.' 'He is faith, I am full. The combination makes it faithful.' [he chuckles] [laughter] That is not how faithfulness works. Faithfulness has to be absolute. It means the very difficult task of overcoming our sometimes momentary doubts, sometimes prolonged doubts, about him who is the Master. I have known people doubting my Master's mastery when they saw him sick. People have condemned his smoking the hookah. People have condemned the

---

[283] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.162.

[284] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.266.

[285] *Heart to Heart*, vol. I, p.43.

fact that he did not have a degree in mathematics, or science, or Sanskrit, I don't know what. But they forgot that these are not things which make people masters, otherwise a Brahmin should have been, especially one who doesn't smoke and who is also a Sanskrit *pandit*, he should have been the master...

"Those who have lost faith in the Master have been able to do so only because they judge the Master from his flesh and blood, and behaviour. So faith in the Master means the ability to see him as the Master in his naked condition. You see, for us Master says, 'You must be naked before me.' No less must we be able to make the Master naked before us. Strip him of his flesh and blood and you know, his idiosyncrasies of behaviour and see him in his nakedness, then you find his nakedness and your nakedness are the same. We are identical. Faith in the Master now produces in you a replica of him in whom you have faith. Then it is possible to become like the Master."[286]

"Faith in the Master means faith in his ever-eternal nature, in his everlasting love, in his eternal beneficence or benevolence towards us, in the faith that he will provide for us what we need without having to ask for it...

"If you have to have faith in the Master, you must have the ability to see the reality in that person, the essence that is the Master in him. We have all had so much proof of this, not merely in the love that he has showered upon us, the generosity that he has given us, the compassion that he has exhibited towards us, but in our own experience when we have been sitting before him in meditation."[287]

Being convinced that our Master always does the best for us, faith in the Master allows us to develop openness, especially when dealing with the incarnated Master, as reported by Ramesh Balsekar, disciple and successor of Nisargadatta Maharaj:[288]

"I took two decisions. First, to whatever question Maharaj may ask me, I must answer to him immediately, without thinking, without asking myself if my answer is going to please him or not, if he is going to smile or to become angry: I'll let my reply to burst forth. I kept this resolution and I think that Maharaj appreciated this attitude very much. Sometimes,

---

[286] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.30-31.

[287] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.28-29.

[288] Indian guru of Vedantic tradition.

when I was answering him, he would get angry. And then? He was getting angry, that's all... I was accepting that he got angry. So that the head never played its part in our relationship. All was coming from the heart, so that our relationship was total."[289]

Faith is also the cement for building a permanent link with the Master, another reason for developing it as soon as possible:

"It is a fact of my experience that you cannot be where your faith is not. Even a friend, if you have faith in him, trust him, believe in him, you are there with him; the day your faith in your friend is shaken that friendship is broken. You buy goods from a store which is good by your experience; the day your faith is shaken, you stop buying from that store.

"We have not been capable of analyzing our existence in the smallest, in the meanest, in the most trivial of its features to understand that in every interaction between human beings faith is the thing that holds us together; whether it is friendship, whether it is a bond of matrimony, whether it is a teacher/taught relationship, whether it is a ruled/ruler relationship. In every case, without faith, that relationship cannot continue. How then, can you expect to continue a relationship with the Master without similar faith?...

"The intellect is necessary to bring us to a particular place, then faith is necessary to continue our existence there. And that faith must grow until it becomes absolutely total. There is nothing else but faith in us later. Then there is no need for confidence, self-confidence, confidence in anybody else, belief, trust; all this goes away because now there is faith, which is the — if I may be permitted to use a word — the super-transcendental relationship.

"Therefore, faith is not something which I have. It is something which exists between my Master and myself. It is the bond that binds the Master and the disciple together eternally. Without faith there may be a transient bond for the nonce — few days, few months, few years — but certainly not longer than that."[290]

---

[289] Gilles Farcet. "*Rencontre avec le successeur de Nisargadatta.*" In Terre du Ciel No.5, p.25

[290] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. II, p.216-217.

Discrimination and Attention

To undress in order to become open allows us to use the Master as a mirror, which is the surest way to get corrected on our way up, since we constantly need to discriminate what leads us towards Him, towards our goal, from what is misleading us:

"If you stand before the mirror fully dressed, you will see in the mirror a reflection of yourself fully dressed. If you stand naked before the mirror you will see a naked person in the mirror. Therefore we have to become naked first before we can see him in his nakedness, in his utter simplicity, in his realness. Therefore the need for the abhyasi to become naked first. But we want the Master to show himself to us. Is it possible? Because he only shows what you show. Babuji has said, 'I am a mirror, I reflect what is put before me.' You put trust before him, he trusts. You put faith before him, there is faith. You put charity before him, there is charity. The Master is nothing except what you create there in the person that is at that moment."[291]

But as Chariji has beautifully explained in one of his speeches in Bombay,[292] the Master is also useful in showing what we are not, what we have not yet achieved. For example when we feel the softness of Babuji, it is an indication of our hardness, which is our reference, our standard.

Very close to this proper use of the Master lies the focusing of our attention on the Master, as explained and encouraged in the following passage:

"The need to keep your attention focused on the Master is not just to see if he is pleased. But to see Him, forget everything else in Him, remember only Him, look only to Him, then we are able to become more and more perfect because we see the changing nuances; and he sees you are attentive and he teaches you more and more, gives you more and more, bestows upon you more and more. Eventually he will make you like himself."[293]

---

[291] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.31.

[292] 6 May 1991.

[293] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.78.

Love, Pain, and Sacrifice

There is the human tendency to tell ourselves infantile stories about love. So, we must try to avoid this pitfall and help ourselves to become more realistic about it, by means of a selection of quotations showing the strong association between love for the Master, and dependence on Him and acceptance of pain and sacrifice. Such a statement is not the exclusive privilege of Sahaj Marg philosophy, as the following quotation testifies:

Q: You speak of the necessity to experience excruciating pain. Can an understanding of the unmasking process make it unnecessary to go through the pain?

A: That is a very tricky proposition. Understanding does not mean that you actually do it; you just understand it. We can understand the physiological process of how someone is tortured and how they experience pain, but the actual experience would be altogether different. The philosophical or intellectual understanding of pain is not enough. You must actually feel something properly. The only way to get to the heart of the matter is to actually experience it for yourself, but you do not have to create painful situations. These situations will occur with the help of a spiritual friend who is a doctor with a sharp knife.

Q: If you are in the process of surrendering and your spiritual friend at that point seems to point his scalpel at you and take away your anaesthesia, then that is an extremely terrifying situation. Your spiritual friend seems to be very angry and disgusted and you want to run. Would you explain this?

A: That is just the point. It is a matter of an operation without the use of anaesthetics. You have to be willing to do it. If you run away, it is like a man who needs an appendectomy running out of the operating room; his appendix might burst.[294]

The necessary pain may be felt and expressed in different ways, as the following quotations show us:

"When we are absolutely sincerely in love with him, profoundly worshipping him, totally adoring him, wanting with every fibre of our

---

[294] *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*. Shambhala Dragon Editions, 1987, p.84-85.

being to become like him, then if you say, 'Oh Master,' you see, it has an effect. There is an echo produced, and that echo is his grace which says... if you remember the story of Babuji going to the well in his house to brush his teeth, early morning, and between his chair and the well which is about, I don't know, five metres, he was overcome by his intense anguish, intense longing to become like his Master. It was a pain in his heart, you see, not something bubbling with joy. In love there can be no joy. The Occidental weakness, and the mistake, is to expect joy in love. The real tradition, the occult tradition, the mystic tradition, the secret traditions of all ages, of all climes, of all races, only speaks of the pain of love. This pain attracted his Master's Grace, his Master's attention and he said, 'When this thought has come to you that you want to be like me, you are already like me.' A blessing is conferred. Intense pain brings about intense blessing. Superficial pain, no blessing. Assumed pain, assumed blessings. As you give, so shall you get."[295]

"'Suffer like me because suffering is necessary to mould you.'[296] You cannot put iron in a frigidaire and hammer it into shape. You have to put it into the fire. Whoever made metal pieces by cooling them? Every physicist knows that when you cool them more and more they shatter like crystals. That is what is happening to us. We become colder and colder, and every tiny knock shatters us. We are broken into bits and pieces.

"So you see, the material analogy holds even here. But we are not matter, we are spirit. Therefore when we suffer pain we are really preventing the shattering of ourselves into bits and pieces by holding them together with an inexorable grip of gravitation which we call pain. Pain is to us what gravity is to the cosmic universe, you see, holding the system together in such a way that things cannot fly off, that there is no disintegration of the self. In pleasure, we are disintegrating. In pain, the pain in some way acts like the force of gravitation which is universal, holding together not merely the planets and the sun but a whole solar system together, the whole galaxy together and millions of galaxies in one grand cosmical canvas. It is **pain** that holds us together. It is **pleasure** that shatters us. Therefore the saint takes up pain and says, 'Let me be myself. Let me not lose an atom of myself either by way of material atoms or spiritual atoms. Let my mind not be shattered. Let my soul not be shattered.' And they find, in their wisdom, through experience, that this gravitation effect of pain is the thing which holds a

---

[295] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.51-52.

[296] Chariji is quoting here his Master Babuji.

personality together without ever the possibility of disintegration of character personality coming upon it"[297]

As usual, what is recommended by a true guide is something he has experienced himself, so that he is within his rights in denouncing our avoidance or flight reactions, and to give us advice, reassurance and encouragement:

"Everyone has his own story of pain and sorrow. I too have mine, but that is of a different nature. When fortune favoured me, I got access to my Master's feet and submitted myself entirely to His will. Soon I developed a peculiar state of mind which continued for a considerable period of time. After that I developed a feeling of impatience in me which persisted. It soon developed into a sort of restlessness and pain. After a time the pangs of it had aggravated so much that if anybody else, not in touch with spirituality, had it, he might have been inclined to commit suicide. But the feeling, 'Let Thy will be done,' which was deeply rooted in me, gave me courage and consolation to bear it.

"I had that pain-longing, craving or restlessness, as one may be pleased to call it, so dear to my heart that for it I could sacrifice even thousands of lives of mine. I wish to have the same pain created in me again, which no joy or bliss can ever match. It had no parallel and for it one might be induced to forego even the bliss of paradise. I fear people might be led away to misunderstand it as a fit of lunacy. But dear brethren, all that a hungry man wants is loaves, and my entire structure was built up in that way. For this reason I eagerly wish this pain to be created in you all which shall be a source of satisfaction to me as well. Does it not thus become a part of your duty to see that I am satisfied in this respect."[298]

"See, we are used today, in our modern societies, the smallest headache and we run for our pills. But Nature has its own system of intervention that when the pain exceeds my tolerance, what we call the pain threshold, I go, I become unconscious. This is a well-known phenomenon, you see, but nobody cares to wait till he becomes unconscious. He says, 'No, no, I don't want this pain. Why even a little pain? We are not here for little pains.' And I was remarking to some persons yesterday, not even the pain of childbirth. Therefore many choose not to have children, or they go to the artificial extent of having a caesarean birth, foolishly imagining that it is less painful.

---

[297] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.103.

[298] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. II, p.3

"So you see, this running away from pain, seeking to escape pain, avoidance of pain, plunges us into more and more misery than we would have suffered with the pain. Nature has its own way. The Master has his own way of dealing with the situation. Nature is blind force. Master is a conscious, loving, motherly, fatherly entity. It is better to rely on him than to become unconscious at the limit of pain. Therefore only at the limit of pain we find the Master. A thorn pricks you in the foot and you say, 'Oh gosh, Babuji Maharaj, why did this happen to me? New pair of shoes but the thorn was long enough to pierce through it.' So this is the, you know, the enormous dependence we have to develop on the guru, on the Master. This is also in a way his blessing that as we learn to tolerate our circumstances, our capacity to tolerate increases, little by little perhaps, but nevertheless inexorably it increases, until we are able to master the ultimate pain.

"I wish to emphasize that spirituality is essentially a way of pain mastery. Pleasure any fool can master and suffer. There mastery does not give you happiness, it gives you suffering. The more you have of enjoyment, the more you suffer subsequently. Here mastery of the pain ensures you everlasting peace. Utter and total and absolute and magnificent victory over all pain. Absolute. That is the final mastery. Anyone who seeks to become like the Master must be able to first accept the necessity for pain. Second, accept the pain when it comes. Tolerating it till you can and then you know, silently weeping and his help comes. Third, progressing on that path of accepting pain to its final limit when the pain becomes not pleasure but ecstasy. That is divine ecstasy. So who is prepared for this? I don't know.

"But I remind you of the story about Babuji and myself when he said, 'You want to be me. You want to be like myself.' I said, 'Yes, that is why I am here.' He said, 'In that case you have to suffer everything I have suffered.' And I don't know whether it was foolish or wise, I said, 'Yes.' So you see he did not say, 'Enjoy everything that I enjoy.' He said, 'Suffer everything I have suffered.' All great saints have suffered. No exception. Even those who are approaching saintliness have suffered. Those aspiring to saintliness will surely suffer. The saint doesn't suffer in the sense that we suffer, because for him pain is something he has mastered. He undergoes pain as we see it but he is the master of that pain nevertheless. We are undergoing the pain, we have not mastered it, therefore we are suffering that pain.

"In this sense the crucifixion of Christ, the burning at the stake of so many saints in the medieval times, it is a proof, you see, that the final suffering is the final liberation, not death."[299]

This last point leads us to the association between love and sacrifice, which usually doesn't need to kill our bodies in order to be effective:

"Lalaji, Babuji's Guru and Master, we call him Grand Master, he used to say that the family is the best environment for spirituality, because it is in the family you learn love and sacrifice. Now if you divorce your wife what is the sacrifice? Or if you throw away your children what is the sacrifice? That is why I was so angry. Because the environment which we have is what is necessary for our spiritual development. Like a mango tree grows in one place and if you take it and put it in the mountains it will not grow. So we must live as we are living and become saints.

"So this is the problem, that in Sahaj Marg we must lead a natural life, people must get married, have children, support them, look after them, love them and sacrifice for them. Of course, they also sacrifice for us, isn't it? So a family makes a mutual love possible and because of that love, sacrifice becomes possible. Now why is this important for Sahaj Marg? Because you have to love the Master. Here the goal is represented by the Master because we believe the Master is Divinity come in human form to help us and, as Babuji used to say, 'In mathematics if A equals B and B equals C, A is also equal to C.' So the Master is God in human form. And why does He come in human form? Because we cannot recognize a God which does not exist before us. So He comes in a form which we can... like, you know, sitting with him, talking with him, eating with him and slowly we learn to love him, which only means we take Him into our heart, because this love is not the human love, it is the spiritual love where the devotee takes the Master into his or her heart. Now, only when we have love can we sacrifice. So, what is it we sacrifice for the Master?...

"You sacrifice yourself, which is called surrender; so this surrender is impossible without total love. Therefore, without family existence, even though we have to love the wife, the husband, the children, the uncle, the mother, the father, everybody, we have to love them in such a way that we can leave them mentally."[300]

---

[299] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.98-99.

[300] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.226-228.

Will and Surrender

We should now be ready to tackle surrender, which contains the other spiritual qualities in itself, since it is the ultimate result of them. This is especially true of our will, which of course must also be used so as to be more and more strengthened for its real purpose, i.e., to reach Him, to become Him. Without our good will, no surrender is possible. But at the same time, surrender cannot be a voluntary act:

"Every time you apply your will it is strengthened, every time you escape or avoid applying the will it is weakened.

So if you want absolute will power of the highest order, almost divinised in nature, one has to apply the will constantly. If you are only applying it now and then it's like a train which is being only pushed now and then, you see, it will move a foot and stop. Or a car. Every time you remove your foot from the accelerator the car will come to a stop. You have to keep pressing the accelerator all the time, which means a continuous application of pressure on the accelerator of the car. Your will is like that. Every time you use your will it is strengthened, every time you don't use it, out of laziness, out of unwillingness, out of disbelief in your own will, it is weakened.

"So continuous work, continuous application of the will, will strengthen your will to such an extent that in a few years it is possible to have a masterly will, you see, or shall we say an almost masterly will."[301]

"Surrender can never be an act of will, because the will is a manifestation of the ego. Surrender can only result from a moment of illumination, when I recognize His presence and say, 'My God, He is eternal, I am transitory, I am transient and I have been thinking I am the master guiding Him. He is the eternal presence which makes me come out of death into life, go back into death out of life. I am only a puppet in His hands.' Then comes the grand moment of surrender out of a realisation that this is reality, this is truth. The will can never be active in surrender. Now, I would have one question to ask you. When Babuji wrote, 'Surrender starts with an act of will,' is there not a contradiction in what I am now saying?

---

[301] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.37.

"There is no contradiction at all. The will is an instrument of illumination itself — what I said, you know, that the ego is what surrenders itself. What I mean is, without the illumination the will cannot be active in this function. You have the intellect. My intellect tells me, 'Drunkenness is against my interests; I am going to the dogs.' But my will cannot function. But the moment that intellect functions in its right sphere and I am able to accept it with my heart, then this miracle takes place. We see books printed and one day, we read that which we never read for twenty years; it's an act of illumination, not of intellect, you see. So, when that illumination comes, the will functions in the right way and surrenders itself; which is the same as saying, the ego surrenders itself, which I said earlier in my talk. No contradiction. One can perhaps say, it is the last act of the will when it surrenders itself. But please remember, the will too is not destroyed, because as long as the ego is there, the will is there. It is divinised, now it performs at His command, and that means it is a Divine will now which functions, instead of a merely human will."[302]

The will being co-operative, we may use further quotations to describe this last and difficult stage of surrendering to the Master:

"We practise *bhakti* or devotion in order to achieve communion with the Supreme Master. We look upon Him with faith and reverence. By degrees we become so closely intimate to Him that every other object loses prominence in our eyes. This is submission to the will of the Master, or in other words, the beginning of self-surrender. It goes on developing as our faith grows stronger. It brings us to a stationary condition stopping the oscillations of the mind. In due course we begin to feel ourselves overpowered by some great force which drives our mind away from everything else. We become free of the unwanted activities, sticking all the time to the right functioning of the organs (the *indriyas*). Self-surrender is nothing but a state of complete resignation to the will of the Master, with total disregard of self. A permanent stay in this condition leads to the beginning of the state of negation. When we surrender ourselves to the great Master we begin to attract a constant flow of the highest Divine force from Him. In this state a man thinks or does only that which is his Master's will. He feels nothing in the world to be his belonging but everything as a sacred trust from the Master and he does everything, thinking it to be his Master's bidding. His will becomes completely subservient to the will of the Master...

---

[302] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.151-152.

"It is not an ordinary thing to be achieved easily. It begins after complete negation of all senses and faculties for which we proceed by elementary rules of devotion. We submit to our master, thinking him to be a super-human being. We love him with faith and reverence, trying by all means to attract his attention and favour. For this purpose we connect our link with him in the light of the worldly relationship only for the sake of facility. We think of him as father, brother, master, or beloved. The process, if taken up in right earnest, is greatly helpful to a disciple. The strong link of attraction thus established leads him to a state of devotion and surrender. The conception of a guru as a mother is, in my opinion, by far the most appropriate and advantageous to a disciple. A mother is the very embodiment of love and affection. Only a mother's heart can forbear with patience all the troubles and miseries caused to her son, thinking all the while of trying to provide for her son's comfort and happiness. The same is the position of the real Master or guru, who is the spiritual mother of the disciple. As such, the guru is always on the lookout for the spiritual welfare of the child, the disciple. It is due to the affectionate attachment of the guru with his disciple that the attention of the great Father, with whom his spiritual mother is so closely connected, is directed towards him. A mother's affection is well known but people know very little of the guru's affection and still less of God's affection. The function of a mother and of a true guru are closely similar. The mother retains a child within her womb for a certain duration. The guru, too, retains the spiritual child within his mental sphere for a certain duration. During this period the disciple, like the baby in the womb, sucks his energy and gets nourishment from the spiritual waves of the guru's thoughts. When the time matures he is born in the brighter world and thence his own spiritual life begins. If the disciple enters the mental sphere of the guru, surrendering all his belongings to him, it takes only seven months to deliver him into the brighter world. But the process is generally delayed for a considerable time because while in the guru's mental sphere the disciple retains the consciousness of his own thoughts and feelings. Thus, we find that the position of the guru is much the same as that of a mother. The conception of the guru as a spiritual mother promotes within us the feelings of love, reverence and surrender which are the main factors of a spiritual life."[303]

We have quoted so far mostly Chariji and sometimes Babuji. As far as Lalaji is concerned, we shall not hope (in case we are still afraid of surrendering) for a different position regarding this subject:

---

[303] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. I, p.87-89.

"After one has found a guru, what an aspirant has to do is only to surrender to the guru as if he was a dead body in the hands of a dresser."[304]

Again here, the Masters are examples of surrendering, 'doing' much more than what they require from us, i.e., surrendering only to Him. In exchange for that faithful and complete letting go, we shall be freed of everything, including our search for liberation, at least at the moment of our physical death:

"Master said, 'A Master must surrender to everything in this universe.' That is his problem, that is his ability to do. We surrender only to him. See, therefore, in expressing our limited humanity, our limitations to love, to obey, to follow, to perform, our limitations of capacities, this is a supremely simple way."[305]

"So, what do you gain by surrendering? Everything. What does God lose by your not surrendering? Nothing! What does He gain when you think you surrender but it is He who has surrendered to you? Something which He can make use of, for His purpose. So, all that He gets is another instrument, you see. Like I have a chest of tools, if one instrument is blunt, I take another instrument and throw this away. It is not my loss, it is the instrument's loss. So please remember, that it is He who has surrendered to His creation. It is He who has surrendered to every bit of creation. And this truth my Master has repeated. Babuji Maharaj has said, 'When a person surrenders to God, he surrenders to everything in the universe.' It cannot be otherwise. It is like a zookeeper, you see. A zookeeper cannot have a favourite snake; he looks after all of them, he has to feed all of them, look after their health, look after their cleanliness, wash the pit of the snake, the cage of the tiger. Isn't it? So, He is a zookeeper who has created all of us, and is waiting for us to evolve into that which is the culmination of evolution, Himself."[306]

"I cannot conceive, after being with my Master, that a soul can have its identity in a recognizable form in the hereafter. To know who it is, or to know who is coming across the border - it cannot possibly know this. Now I am talking of unliberated souls who are going to be reborn, because death removes this memory from this life. Then who is the child, who is the wife, who is the mother? And if the soul is liberated it goes to

---

[304] *Truth Eternal*, p.59.

[305] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.59.

[306] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.151.

the brighter world and has no more concern with us. If we understand this fact correctly, that at my death no other soul of a human being can be there to receive me, then comes the possibility of my overcoming this fear of losing my humanness and loving my Master, and surrendering to him. Because for him this barrier of death doesn't exist, he can pass through this barrier, or the border between the lives, up and down, as many times as he chooses. Then comes the faith that when this life of mine is ending, He, the real beloved, will not wait at some abstract border of life, you know, but He will be at my death bed to take me away with Him. That is the biggest fear and the biggest promise, both in one."[307]

If the surrendering has taken place before physical death, the abhyasi is able to see His Master everywhere. As a consequence he automatically knows what to do, because he is now able to serve Him without any 'internal' or 'external' conflict, without errors of discernment, as illustrated in the following passages from Chari:

"At that stage, it no longer matters whether the Master is outside or inside. In fact the interior Master becomes preferable because he is permanent, He is eternal in my heart, He will be with me throughout eternity. The external Master is sure to disappear, you see.

"So this is the miracle of the Sahaj Marg spiritual system, that even though there is this person always present in the heart, He has been present ever since the dawn of creation, whether I was a blob of mineral, or an animal or a plant or a vegetable — anything — He was there inside me. Yet we have to see Him outside, accept Him outside, love Him outside, surrender to Him outside, and then miraculously find Him inside. All along He has been there, and we have been foolish enough not to perceive, recognize and surrender to Him inside."[308]

"The eternal Master is in the heart of everything. As it is said in the *Gita*, you see, 'I am in the heart of every created thing,' *Hriddeso sannivishtaha...*

"Otherwise we are like those *rishis*, who called Lord Krishna for dinner at midnight and had prepared everything and when Lord Krishna came as a *suwar*, as a jungle-pig, they beat it. And they realised too late when the beating fell on their own back that the Lord had come and gone. We have to find the Lord everywhere, the Lord our Master in everything.

---

[307] Ibid, p.201.

[308] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.57.

Then we shall develop a respect for life, a transcendental value for life, which is not the socialized concept of serving the poor, serving the weak, opening hospitals, opening *pathashalas* (schools), giving free food. This is stupid. They are seeing the poor in the poor people, not *Daridra Narayana*. We must see the Master in the poor. There too he is pervasive. We must see the Master in the sick. There too he is pervasive. What can there be in this universe in which the Lord is not?

"So you see, when we are able to develop these qualities it really means that in some mysterious fashion our Master has created in us the ability to see him wherever we look. As the Gita says, *Ye yatha mam prapadyante taamsthataiva bhajaam yaham* — one aspect. *Yo maam pasyati sarvatra sarvamcha mayi pasyati* — 'He who sees me everywhere and sees everything in me, such a man I never let go of and he can never let go of me..."

"We have to become *bhaktas* of the Lord. We have to become *dristas* in the sense that we see **him** everywhere, then there will be no quarrels between us, among ourselves, because you cannot quarrel with yourself. How can you quarrel with yourself?"[309]

In other words, each situation is accepted as it is, since it is considered as sent by the Master:

"Anything that happens to us is the best thing that could happen to us. So when you find the best, don't go around looking for something better, because in the English language — good, better, best and that is it. There can be nothing better than the best...

"The possibility that what was yours is yours and will always be yours. This is an acceptance of the situation as a gift from God, not of destiny."[310]

As a consequence, the most appropriate act will be chosen at each moment, without the control of the ego, which falls away when it realises it has become irrelevant.

"Once we take away the watcher there is a tremendous amount of space, because he and his bureaucracy take up so much room. If we eliminate the filter of 'I' and 'other', then the space becomes sharp and precise and intelligent. Space contains the tremendous precision of being

---

[309] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.16-17.

[310] Ibid., p.93.

able to work with the situations in it. One does not really need the 'watcher' or 'observer' at all.

Q: Does the watcher exist because you want to be living at what seems a higher level, whereas if you just let go, perhaps you would be *here*?"

A: Yes, that is true. When the watcher disappears, the notion of higher and lower levels does not apply, so there is no longer any inclination to struggle, attempting to get higher. Then you just are where you are.

Q: Can you remove the watcher by force? Wouldn't that be the game of evaluation again?

A: You do not have to regard the watcher as a villain. Once you begin to understand that the purpose of meditation is not to get higher but to be present, here, then the watcher is not efficient enough to perform that function, and it automatically falls away. The basic quality of the watcher is to try to be extremely efficient and active. But total awareness is something you already have, so ambitious or so-called 'efficient' attempts to be aware are self-defeating. As the watcher begins to realise that it is irrelevant, it falls away.

Q: Can there be awareness without a watcher?

A: Yes, because the watcher is only paranoia. You could have complete openness, a panoramic situation, without having to discriminate between two parties, 'I' and 'other'."[311]

Therefore, it is our ego that we surrender to the Master, with the result of becoming perfect instruments, as parts of the Master:

"When we say, 'I surrender,' what is it that we really surrender? Because, you know, you can give your body without giving your heart, you can give your mind without giving your body, you can give a present without giving love with it. But when you give your ego, now you also don't remain. Therefore surrender really means surrendering the ego to the Master. So people say, 'Oh! I am working for the Master, my body is his, my life is his.' When you say, 'My life is his,' it is still mine! How can **my** life be his? It is still mine when I say 'my life.'

"Therefore, Babuji used to say, 'If a man, or if a person says, 'I have surrendered,' he has not surrendered; because 'I' have surrendered, the 'I' is still there.' You understand? So the 'I have surrendered,' can never be right, it is a lie. One who has surrendered cannot know that he has

---

[311] *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*. Shambhala Dragon Editions, 1987, p.73-74.

surrendered, because he doesn't exist to know. Therefore, such a person who has surrendered to his Master exists in the world as a body which is used by his Master as an instrument, because he is part of the Master. So this is the final stage of surrender, but not the final stage of spirituality."[312]

Reality is the final stage of spirituality, i.e., and is of course also the Master, in whom we will find our Self, in whom we will find God, and then merge with Him. Consequently, these entities of Self, Master, and God are no longer separated.[313]

Realisation and mergence require a very high level of preparation and an everlasting evolutive process:

"If you want to remove the limitations that I apparently have, remove the limitations in yourselves, then you will see me as you are, which is the reality."[314]

"Sensory perception has to be refined to such a level that the barriers of your understanding, the barriers of your emotions, the barriers of your own illusions which you have created for yourself, the barriers of the flesh and blood standing before you, can all be sort of whisked away at one stroke; and there you are face to face with the inner reality of that which you have been seeking, that which you must become, with which you must merge."[315]

"I believe the law of evolution, which says everything must evolve, inexorably evolve, is for this change of form, change of qualities, change of essence, into the ultimate state, so that each in turn can finally merge with him. I don't otherwise see any meaning of evolution. Why should not a rat remain a rat for all eternity? Why? It is meaningless unless there was a purpose behind evolution. The purpose is the same. As we have to evolve to that level to find our union with him, merge with him, they too have to evolve to merge with him finally by becoming like him."[316]

---

312 *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.230.

313 At that stage we don't have to imagine a proper use or any kind of use of the Master, since relationship is not supposed to exist any more.

314 *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.32.

315 Ibid, p.128.

316 Ibid, p.149-150.

— 13 —

METHOD, MISSION, AND MASTER AS A WHOLE

The proper use and misuses of the Sahaj Marg method, of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, and of the Master have been separately described, as a necessary preparatory step. We may now see how these uses and misuses relate to the Sahaj Marg system as a whole. Once again our task will be greatly facilitated by two extracts from Chari's talks:

"In some places there is no Mission, there is no Master, there is no method. The three things which Babuji said we must have, and the three things which must be only one: one Master, one Mission, one method. So, if somebody is in Shri Ram Chandra Mission and meditating under the Sahaj Marg system, and has a master, somebody else other than the Master, then how can it be true? So please remember, one Master, one Mission, one method. Any deviation from this and we are going on the wrong route. The road may be very good, but it will not take me to the right destination. For instance, you came here to Château-d'Oex yesterday. You have the big autoroutes, very nice, but then you have to go to the smaller roads as we come here and then to the smallest mountain roads. We have to take the road which takes us to our destination. If you say, 'I will travel only on the autoroute,' well, we may have ended up, I don't know, somewhere else. That is why you follow somebody who knows the roads. And here, the man who knows the road is the Master.

"So, it is terribly important, vitally important for our spiritual progress that we have only one each of these three things, one Master, one Mission, and one method. And eventually, it is all one, because after we meditate for some years, we find that the Master is the method, the Master is the Mission, and He is the goal, too, for us. So the three become one. Now if you say, 'I will have this master and that mission and that method,' it cannot ever be one. Now, this also we find, some people want to meditate with Ram Chandra but following a Christian or a Buddhist or a Taoist or some such method, and their goal is peace of mind with a lot of money. Therefore, you know, just by being attached to Ram Chandra with your mind, you're not going to become a saint. It is like saying, 'I want apple strudel made with apricots.' It's not possible. So in this

Mission, we must adopt the method given by this Mission, follow the Master who is giving us this method, connect our hearts to His, realise that He is the goal, and then there is the possibility of success, otherwise there is not."[317]

"My revered Master has said that there are only three things that an abhyasi can call his own: the Master, the Mission and the method. He has created the Mission, and evolved the method after considerable research, basing the method upon the foundation created by our revered Lalaji Maharaj, and therefore they are one. The Master, the method, and the Mission cannot be separated willfully by anybody. He has said that one must commence the abhyas under the direct guidance of the Guide, and the Mission has been structured to fulfill the purpose of serving the needs of the abhyasis who are seriously interested in their spiritual lives.

"The Master has given us clear and unambiguous instructions and advice, and this we are duty bound to follow if we wish to reach the highest goal that the Sahaj Marg system has made available to us, and which is our Master's sacred promise to us too. It is fallacious to think that what is essentially one can be broken up into artificial parts, and our spiritual allegiance transferred to the part of our choice. There are persons who do devoted service at the various celebrations such as selling books, looking after the kitchen, serving food, cleaning the premises, and so on. But if they do not meditate regularly and do not develop devotion — and eventually love — for the Master, then their progress virtually stops. My Master has clarified that while service is no doubt good and necessary too, nevertheless without sadhana a person cannot really progress in spirituality.

"There are cases of persons who do the sadhana with obvious seriousness, and with visible regularity, too. In most cases there has been lack of progress, and my Master has once again been gracious enough to clarify that sadhana without love for the Master has no meaning, and added in His typically gentle manner, 'But I give them some crumbs of spirituality since no one can be permitted to go away with empty hands after coming to me.'

"There are the cases of abhyasis who are totally devoted and attached to the Mission, but who are careless about their meditation, and have no care for the Master. In such cases too they suffer from lack of much progress, and the Master's words are there again — one must be devoted to the Master, do his sadhana regularly without modifying the method to suit his own convenience, and also be capable of service to humanity

---

[317] *Heart to Heart*, vol. II, p.287-288.

through the Mission that has been established for this very purpose. Otherwise the fruits of labour will not be fully available.

"It is therefore obvious that the Master works through the Mission that he has established for that very purpose, and uses the method that has been remodeled by him to suit modern living conditions, and it must be obvious to all that to separate the three is an endeavour that will not reward anyone, least of all the one who is trying to split the essential unity into its component parts.

"I pray on this auspicious occasion that all the serious seekers of spiritual values, and especially those who are striving to reach the promised goal, do not squander away their lives in the empty pursuit of partial goals. It is not possible for one to stay within the Mission and practise another method, even while accepting the Master. It is not possible for one to accept the Master and practise His method after joining another Mission, or by staying out of the Mission. Nor can one progress by remaining faithful to the Mission, and practising the method seriously if he does not accept the Master.

"The message on this auspicious occasion is therefore clear to one and all: make the Master, the Mission and the method yours. Be devoted to the Master. Serve the Mission in whatever way you can. And finally, practise the Sahaj Marg system as given to you by the Master assiduously and faithfully, with regularity, and then see for yourself what the results can be. May the Divine Master give all aspirants the necessary wisdom and strength of purpose, and make this possible to one and all. I pray that He may bless all with His love and grant us progress to the goal."[318]

We have now finished with the proper uses and misuses of the method, the Mission, the preceptors, and the Master. I would like to suggest that this information will help us to see and discriminate more sharply and efficiently within ourselves, so that we can use rather than misuse the three Ms: method, Mission and Master.

And positively, from Chari:

"Master had immense faith that ultimately human beings will correct themselves. Some wisdom will dawn and we should leave it to them to accept the teaching, to follow the teaching, to practise the teaching and make themselves what He wanted them to be... I can only entreat you on this occasion to at least start praying for it, sincerely pray for it, so that, in

---

[318] P. Rajagopalachari. "Message for Basant Panchami", 1992.

the not very distant future, we shall be an organization, we shall be an assembly of abhyasis, of whom we can be proud and say, well at least this is what Master wanted us to become, that we are seeing before our eyes."[319]

This pride of course does not exclude modesty, a quality upon which we have not sufficiently dwelled so far, but to which we will give a compensatory last but not least place with two quotations, the first by Chari, the second by Babuji:

"The possibility, the spiritual truth, the spiritual grandeur of self-realisation, mergence with the Divine, is absolutely available to everything that exists in this universe. Let us not, in our arrogance, think that it is only for us, the abhyasis of this Mission; let us not even pretend to be compassionate towards human beings and say it is for all humanity. Let us be divine and say it is for everything that exists. In its time everything must merge with Him."[320]

"He alone can climb up a height who has created in himself recognition of his lowliness."[321]

One of the main results of my participation in this book was that I became much more aware of my personal limitation as far as knowledge and capacity to work individually were concerned. On a more general basis, I also became much more aware of the limitation of knowledge itself. This unexpected gift made me feel a little more humble and with that the realisation that when we feel more humble our gratitude towards the Master increases.

As regards the discipline of psychology, I now fully realise that where psychology 'thins' and finally ends, spirituality begins...

END

---

[319] *Principles of Sahaj Marg*, vol. III, p.122-123.

[320] *A Preceptor's Guide*, vol. III, p.150.

[321] *Complete Works of Ram Chandra* ,vol. II, p. 127.

GLOSSARY

ABERRATIONS: Deviation from what is normal, a lapse in control of one's mental faculties.

ACTUALIZED: To have made something happen.

AGGRANDIZEMENT: To cause something to seem greater, to magnify or exaggerate.

ANALOGY: Comparison made to show a similarity.

ANALYZING: To examine in detail in order to discover meaning or essential features.

ANIMISM: The belief that natural objects and the universe itself have desires and intentions. The idea that there is an immaterial force that animates the universe. Usually refers to a primitive or tribal belief or practice.

ANTITHESIS: The exact opposite.

ASPIRATION: Strong desire to achieve something, such as spiritual progress.

AUTISM: Abnormal self-absorption. A tendency in one's thinking or perceiving to be regulated unduly by personal desires or needs at the expense of regulation of objective reality.

AUTONOMY: Independent, state of self-determination.

BIO-PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL: A joining of the biological, psychological, and spiritual.

CHEMOTHERAPY: Treatment of disease by means of chemical agents.

COMPULSIONS: Inner drives that cause people to perform actions.

CONVERGENCE: Moving towards the same point; tending towards the same result.

CYBERNETICS: A feedback or circular system.

DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES: Any method by which a person automatically protects his self or ego against unpleasantness, anxiety, or loss of self-esteem.

DEMOBILIZATION PHENOMENON: Disintegration of the group or break-up among the members.

DEPERSONALIZATION: An abnormal state of consciousness in which the subject feels unreal and detached from himself and the world.

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY: The branch of psychology that studies how human beings develop psychologically. It deals with behaviours expected at various stages of life from infancy to old age.

DEVITALIZATION: To make weak or lifeless or the draining away of life.

DIFFERENTIATION: Making a distinction between two things.

DISAPPROBATION: Moral or social disapproval.

DISAVOWAL: To deny knowledge of or responsibility for.

DIS-IDEALIZATION: Taking away from something which is considered perfect.

DISSIMULATE: To conceal one's real feelings by pretense.

DISSOCIATION: The separation of a group of ideas or mental processes from the rest of the personality, so that they lead an independent existence.

EQUILATERAL: A geometric figure having all its sides of equal length.

ESOTERICISM: That which is not understood except by the enlightened or initiated.

ETYMOLOGICAL: The studying of words.

EXISTENTIAL: Pertaining to the experience of what exists.

GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY: The theory that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

HETERODESTRUCTION: Destruction of the other.

HOLOTROPIC: Towards wholeness.

HYPERVENTILATION: Rapid breathing. An increase in the depth and rate of breathing sometimes resulting in cramps and dizziness.

INTELLECTUALIZE: Thinking with disregard for experience or feeling, without trusting the heart.

INTERIORIZATION: As above, or turn inward.

INTROSPECTION: Examination of one's inner self, thoughts, and feelings.

ISOSCELES: Geometric term meaning having two sides of a triangle of equal length.

MALAISE: A feeling of unease, mild sickness, or depression.

MALFORMATION: Not normally formed, or deformity in the shape or structure of a part.

MALFUNCTIONING: Not functioning, working poorly.

MANIFESTATIONS: Demonstrations. Things made plain.

MODALITIES: Ways of doing something.

NARCISSISM: An exceptional interest in or admiration for oneself.

NEUROLEPTICS: Major tranquilizers used in the treatment of psychosis.

NEUROPHYSIOLOGIST: One who studies the functions of the nervous system.

NEUROTIC: Mild mental disorder characterized by anxiety, depression, or excessive behaviour.

NORMOSIS: State of normality.

OPERANT CONDITIONING: A method of training in which reward or punishment evokes required behaviour change.

PALEONTOLOGY: Study of fossils to determine the structure and evolution of extinct animals and plants.

PARAMNESIA: False memory, false recognition, example: *deja vu*

PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL: See parapsychology.

PARAPSYCHOLOGY: The study of mental phenomena, such as telepathy, which are beyond the scope of normal physical explanation.

PEJORATIVE: Having an unpleasant or disparaging connotation; to make worse.

PERVERTING: To use wrongly or badly. To distort or debase.

PORTRAITURE: The practice or art of making portraits.

PROJECTION MECHANISM: The process of putting one's own hidden desires and impulses onto others.

PSEUDOMUTUALITY: A relationship between two persons in which conflict in views or opinions is solved by simply ignoring it.

PSYCHIATRIST: A medical doctor specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.

PSYCHOANALYSIS: A method of studying the mind and treating mental and emotional disorders, based on revealing the role of the unconscious mind.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BLOCK: Inability to see something obvious to others or think something through.

PSYCHOLOGIST: An expert on normal and abnormal human and animal behaviour.

PSYCHOLOGY -IES: The scientific study of all forms of human and animal behaviour.

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY: The scientific study of mental disorders.

PSYCHOSOMATIC: Relating to disorders, such as stomach ulcers, thought to be caused or aggravated by psychological factors such as stress.

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC: Having curative value for mental disorders. Pertaining to psychotherapy.

PSYCHOTIC: A person suffering from any form of severe mental disorder where contact with reality is highly distorted.

PSYCHOTROPIC: Capable of affecting mental activity.

QUASI: Resembling but not actually being; seemingly.

RATIONALIZATIONS: To justify one's actions or beliefs with plausible reasons.

RE-BIRTHING TECHNIQUE: Causing to experience being born again for the purpose of healing.

REGRESSION FIXATION: The fixed adoption by an adult of behaviour more appropriate to a child, especially to defend oneself against anxiety.

REPRESSION: Keeping feelings, impulses, or thoughts under control to prevent them from entering one's conscious mind.

RUBRIC: A set of rules of conduct or procedure.

SCHIZOPHRENIC: One who exhibits disorder characterized by withdrawal from reality, hallucinations, delusions, social apathy, and progressive deterioration of the personality.

SCHIZOPHRENIC EPISODE: Describes a person who behaves as above for a short period.

SECTARIANISM: Adhering to a particular sect or group; excluding others.

SEDUCTIVE: Tending to win over, attract, or allure. To lead astray.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION: To make one actual or real.

SOCIOPATHIC: Anti-social and sometimes violent behaviour exhibiting a failure to feel guilt or act responsibly.

SPIRITISM: A less common word for spiritualism as pertaining to mediums.

SPLITTING: The Freudian defense mechanism in which an object or idea (or ego) is separated into two or more parts in order to remove its threatening meaning.

SYNCHRONICITY: An apparently meaningful coincidence in time of two or more similar or identical events that are causally unrelated.

SYNTHESIZING: Combining from simpler components into a more complex whole.

SYSTEMATIZATION: Arranging in pattern or order.

TOTEMISM: The belief in kinship or groups or individuals having a common totem, that is an object, species of animal, plant, or other natural phenomenon.

TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS: A form of psychotherapy that attributes neurosis to lack of balance in the personality between the conflicting ego states of child, adult, and parent.

TRANSFERENCE: The redirection of attitudes and emotions towards a substitute, such as towards the professional during therapy.

TRANSPERSONAL: The feeling of an individual that his consciousness has expanded beyond the normal boundaries of self and limitations of time and space.

TRIANGULATION: The fixing of an unknown point by making it one vertex of a triangle, the other two being known.

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PSYCHOLOGIES AND RELATED SCIENCES

There is an extensive body of more than forty Sahaj Marg books. Please write to:

Shri Ram Chandra Mission
North American Publishing Committee
Post Office Box 269
Molena, GA 30258 USA

References to Sahaj Marg literature already mentioned in the footnotes, or directly in the text, are not repeated here. Once Sahaj Marg literature is well-known, maybe the following books will be of some use for some abhyasis, providing they have realised that intellect is useful only up to a certain point...

CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY

1. AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 3rd Ed. Washington, DC. American Psychiatric Assoc., 1980.
2. COOPER D. *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry*. New York, Ballantine, 1971.
3. EVA A. *The European Handbook of Psychiatry and Mental Health*. 2 vol. Zaragoza, Prensas Univ., Anthropos, 1991.

PSYCHOSOMATICS AND PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY

4. ALEXANDER G. *Eutony the Holistic Discovery of Total Person*. Felix Morrow 13, Welwyn Road Great Neck, New York 11021, Talman Company, 1985.
5. von BERTALANFFY L. *The Mind-Body Problem. A New View*. Psychosomatic Medicine. vol. XXVI, No I, 1964.
6. CHOPRA D. *Perfect Health. The Complete Mind/Body Guide*. New York, Harmony Books, 1990.
7. CHOPRA D. *Quantum Healing*. New York, Bantam, 1989.
8. FAST J. *Body Language*. London, Souvenir Press, 1971.
9. GREENFIELD N. & A.C. *Handbook of Psychophysiology*. New York, Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1972.

10. GROLNICK L. *A Family Perspective of Psychosomatic Factors in Illness.* Family Process II, 1972: p.457- 486.

11. GRODDECK G. *The Book of Id.* New York, Vintage Book, 1961.

12. LOWEN A. *The Language of the Body.* New York, Macmillan, 1967.

13. LOWEN A. *Depression and the Body.* Maryland, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1973.

14. MACLEAN *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases.* vol. CXXXV, No.4, Oct. 1962 + American Journal of Medicine. vol. XXV, No.4, October 1958.

15. PRIBRAM K. *Languages of the Brain.* Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1971.

16. WINNICOTT D.W. "Mind and its Relation to the Psyche-Soma" In Collected papers: p243-254, Tavistock, London, 1958.

COMMUNICATION, SYSTEMIC, FAMILY, NETWORK PSYCHOLOGY

17. BATESON G. (see Broad Spectrum (Transpersonal and Transcultural) Psychology.)

18. BOSZORMENYI-NAGY I. et al. *Invisible Loyalties.* Hagerstown. Maryland, Harper & Row, 1973.

19. BOWEN M. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice.* New York. Jason Aronson, 1978.

20. HALEY J. *Strategies of Psychotherapy.* New York. Grune and Stratton, 1963.

21. MINUCHIN S. *Families and Family Therapy.* Cambridge, MA. Harvard Univ. Press, 1974.

22. RUESCH J. et al. *Communication.* New York. Norton Library, 1968.

23. SPECK R. et al. *Family Networks.* New York. Pantheon, 1973.

24. WATZLAWICK P. et al. *Pragmatics of Human Communication.* New York. Norton, 1967.

LEARNING THEORIES AND BEHAVIOUR THERAPY

25. BANDURA A. *Social Learning Theory.* New York, General Learning Press, 1971.

26. EYSENCK H. et al. *The Causes and Cures of Neuroses.* London, Routledge and Kegan, 1965.

27. HONIG W.K. *Operant Behavior. Areas of Research and Application.* New York, Appleton-Century Crafts, 1966.

28. LIBERMAN R. *A Guide to Behavioral Analysis and Therapy.* Elmsford. New York, Pergamon Press, 1970.

29. PAVLOV I.P. *Conditioned Reflexes.* An Investigation of the Physiological Activity of the Cerebral Cortex. London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1927.

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

30. FLAVELL J. *The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget.* Princeton, NJ. Van Nostrand, 1963.

31. NEISSER U. *Cognition and Reality.* Ithaca, NY. Cornell Univ. Press, 1976.

32. PIAGET J. *The Essential Piaget.* Gruber E. Voneche (Eds), New York, Basic Books, 1977.

33. PIAGET J. *Structuralism.* New York, Basic Books, 1970.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

34. BOWLBY J. *Attachments and Loss.* 2 vols. New York, Basic Books, 1973.

35. FENICHEL O. *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis.* New York, Norton, 1945.

36. FREUD A. *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense.* New York, International Univ. Press, 1946.

37. FREUD S. *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis.* New York, Pocket Books, 1971.

38. FREUD S. T*he Ego and the Id.* SE vol. 19. London, Hogarth Press, 1961 (1923).

39. FREUD S. *Inhibitions Symptoms and Anxiety.* SE vol. 20. London, Hogarth Press, 1959 (1926).

40. FREUD S. *Civilization and its Discontents.* New York, International Univ. Press, 1946.

41. GLOVER E. *The Technique of Psycho-Analysis.* New York, Intern Univ. Press, 1968 (1955).

42. MASTERSON J. *The Narcissistic and Borderline Disorders.* New York, Brunner/Mazel, 1981.

Ego Psychology

43. BLANCK G. et al. *Ego Psychology. Theory and Practice*. New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1974.

44. ERIKSON E. *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York, International Univ. Press, 1959.

45. HARTMAN H. *Ego Psychology and The Problem of Adaptation*. New York, International Univ. Press, 1958.

46. KOHUT H. *The Analysis of the Self*. New York, International Univ. Press, 1971.

47. KOHUT W. et al. "The Disorders of the Self and their Treatment". In Internat. Journal of Psychoanalysis, 1978, 59;4:413-25.

48. LOEVINGER J. *Ego Development*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1976.

Jungian Psychology

49. JACOBI J. *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*. London, Rouledge E. Kegan Paul, 1942.

50. JUNG C.G. *Analytical Psychology. Its Theory and Practice*. New York, Vintage, 1961.

51. JUNG C.G. *Man and his Symbols*. New York, Dell, 1964.

52. JUNG C.G. *The Portable Jung*. J. Campbell (Ed), New York, Viking, 1971.

53. JUNG C.G. *The Undiscovered Self*. New York, Mentor, 1957.

Child Psychology

54. BLOS P. "The Second Individuation Process of Adolescence". In The Pychoanalytic Study of the Child. 967; 22:162-86.

55. CIBA FOUNDATION SYMPOSIUM 33. *Parent-Infant Interaction*. Elsevier (Hol), 1975.

56. KLEIN M. *The Psychoanalysis of Children*. London, Hogarth Press, 1932.

57. KLEIN M. *Envy and Gratitude. Our Adult World*. Melanie Klein Trust, 1975.

58. MAHLER M.S. et al. *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant. Symbiosis and Individuation*. Hutchinson, London, 1975.

59. SPITZ R. *The First Year of Life*. New York, International Univ. Press, 1965.

60. WINNICOTT D.W. *Paediatrics and Psycholology*. In Winnicot D.W., Collected Papers, London, Tavistock, 1958.

TRANSACTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

61. BERNE E. *Games People Play.* New York, Grove Press, 1967.

62. BERNE E. *What Do You Say After You Say Hello?* New York, Bantam, 1972.

EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY

63. BINSWANGER L. "Existential Analysis and Psychotherapy". In Fromm E., Reichman E., Morens J. (Eds). *Progress in Psychotherapy.* N.Y. Grune E., Stratton, 1956.

64. BOSS M. *Psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis.* New York, Basic Books, 1963.

65. MADDI S. *The Existential Neurosis.* J. Abnormal Psychology, 1967;72.

66. MARCEL G. *Philosophy of Existence.* New York, Philosophical Library, 1949.

67. MAY R. *Existential Psychology.* New York, Random House, 1969.

68. YALOM I. *Existential Psychotherapy.* New York, Basic Books, 1980.

NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCES, DEATH AND MOURNING

69. BECKER E. *The Denial of Death.* New York, The Free Press, Macmillan, 1973.

70. DEREK G. *The Life of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross.* New York, Harper E. Row, 1980.

71. GROF S. et al. *Beyond Death. The Gates of Consciousness.* London, Thames E. Hudson, 1980.

72. KASTENBAUM R. et al. *Psychology of Death.* New York, Springer, 1972.

73. KÜBLER-ROSS E. *On Death and Dying.* MacMillan, 1969.

74. MOODY R. *Life After Life.* Covington Mockingbird, 1975.

HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

75. BROOKS C. *Sensory Awareness.* New York, Viking Press, 1974.

76. ELLIS A. *Humanistic Psychotherapy. The Rational-Emotive Approach.* New York, McGraw-Hill,1973.

77. FAGAN J. et al. *Gestalt Therapy Now. Theory, Technique, Applications.* Palo Alto, CA. Science and Behaviour Books, 1970.

78. FROMME E. *The Art of Loving.* New York, Harper & Row, 1956.

79. FROMME E. *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. New York, Bantam, 1967.

80. FRANKL V. *Man's Search for Meaning*. Boston, Beacon, 1963.

81. FRANKL V. *The Unconscious God*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1975.

82. LOWEN A. *The Betrayal of the Body*. New York, MacMillan, 1967.

83. MASLOW A. *Towards a Psychology of Being*. New York, Van Nostrand, 1968.

84. MASLOW A. *The Further Reaches of Human Nature*. New York, Viking, 1971.

85. ORR L. et al. *Rebirthing in the New Age*. Millbrae, Cal Celestial Arts, 1977.

86. PERLS F. *Gestalt Therapy*. Verbatim, New York, Bantam, 1971.

87. REICH W. *Character Analysis*. New York, Noonday Press, 1949.

88. ROGERS C. *On Becoming a Person*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES (MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY)

89. BALINT M. "Therapeutic Aspects of the Doctor-Patient Relationship". In Psychoter. Psychosom; 18:12-33 (1970).

90. BALINT M. *The Doctor, His Patient and The Illness*. London, Pitman, 1957.

91. LIPOWSKI Z.J. "Review of consultation psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine". In General Principles. Psychosom. Med.; 29:153-171, 1967a.

EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

92. GORDON T. *Parent Effectiveness Training*. New York, Wyden, 1971.

93. GORDON T. *Leader Effectiveness Training*. New York, Wyden, 1977.

PARAPSYCHOLOGY

94. CARINGTON W. *Telepathy*. London, Metleren, 1954.

95. EDMUND S. *Hypnotism and the Supernormal*. London, Aquarian Press, 1967.

96. ELIADE M. *Shamanism. The Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. New York, Pantheon, 1964.

97. FREEDLAND N. *The Occult Explosion*. London, Michael Joseph, 1972.

98. FUKURAI T. *Clairvoyance and Thoughtography*. London, Ride E Cie, 1931.

99. IVANOV A. "Soviet Experiments in Eyeless Vision". Internat. Journal of Parapsychology; 6, 1964.

100. OWEN ARG. *Can we Explain the Poltergeist?* New York, Garett Publ., 1964.

101. RHINE J. B. *Extrasensory Perception.* Boston, Buce Humphries, 1934.

102. RHINE L. E. *Mind over Matter.* London, MacMillan, 1970.

103. SEABROOK W. *Witchcraft.* London, Sphere Books, 1970.

104. STEIGER B. *ESP. Your Sixth Sense.* New York, Award Books, 1970.

105. SULLIVAN W. *We Are Not Alone.* London, Penguin, 1970.

106. VASILIEF LL. *Experiments in Mental Suggestion.* Hampshire, Galley Hill Press, 1963.

107. WATSON L. *Supernature.* New York, Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1973.

Oriental Psychology

108. ABHEDANANDA Swami. *True Psychology.* Calcutta, Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 1979 (1946).

109. AUROBINDO. *The Life Divine and the Synthesis of Yoga.* Pondicherry, Centenary Library, XVIII-XXI, n.d.

110. AUROBINDO. *Psychology.* Pondicherry, 1951.

111. CHAUDHURI H. *Mastering the Problems of Living.* New York, Citadel Press, 1968.

112. CHAUDHURI H. "Yoga Psychology", in Charles T. Tart *Transpersonal Psychologies.* Harper & Row, 1975.

113. GOVINDA Lama A. *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy.* Dehli Motilal Banarsidass Publ. 1991.

114. GUENTHER H.V. *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma.* California, Shambhala Publ. Berkeley, 1974.

115. KHAN H.I. *The Sufi Message.* vol. III: *The Art of Personality.* vol. IV: *Mental Purification and Healing.* vol. XI: *Philosophy, Psychology, Mysticism.* Dehli, Motilal Banarsidass Publ. 1989-90-91.

116. KRISHNAMURTI J. *Commentaries on Living.* vol. I.II.III, D. Rajagopal, Ed. Krishnamurti Writings Inc. Ojai, CA.

117. MURPHY G.et al. *Asian Psychology.* New York, Basic Books, 1968.

118. RINPOCHE S. *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying.* Harper, San Francisco, 1992.

119. SEN I. "The Indian Approach to Psychology". In Chaudhuri H. et al. *The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo*. London, George Allen E. Unwin, 1960.

120. SINGH A. K. *The Comprehensive History of Psychology*. Dehli, Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1991.

121. SINHA J. *Indian Psychology*. vol. I: *Cognition*. vol. II: *Emotion and Will*. vol. III: *Epistemology and Perception*. Dehli, Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1991.

BROAD SPECTRUM (TRANSPERSONAL AND TRANSCULTURAL) PSYCHOLOGY

122. ALLISON R. *Minds in Many Pieces*. New York, Rawson and Wade, 1980.

123. ASSAGIOLI R. *Psychosynthesis. A Manual of Principles and Techniques*. New York, Hobbs, Dormen, 1971

124. BATESON G. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind. San Francisco*. Chandler, 1972.

125. BENOIT H. *The Supreme Doctrine*. New York, The Viking Press, 1955.

126. BENOIT H. *Let Go!* London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1962.

127. CAMPBELL J. & MOYERS B. *The Power of Myth*. New York, Doubleday, 1988.

128. CASTANEDA. C. *The Teachings of Don Juan*. Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1968.

129. ELIADE M. *Shamanism: The Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. New York, Pantheon, 1964.

130. ERIKSON E.H. *Insight and Responsibility*. New York, 1964.

131. GROF C. & GROF S. *The Stormy Search for the Self*. Los Angeles, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Perigee, 1992.

132. GROF S. *Realms of the Human Unconscious*. New York, Viking, 1975.

133. GROF S. *The Adventures of Self-Discovery*. München. Kösel Verlag, 1987.

134. JAMES W. *The Principles of Psychology*. vol. I-II. New York, Kover Publ., 1950 (1890).

135. JAMES W. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York, Collier Books, 1961 (1901).

136. JOHANSON G. *Psychology in the Spirit of Tao Te King*. Bell Tower, 1992.

137. JUNG C.G. "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle". In *Collected Works*, vol. VIII. Bollingen Series XX. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.

138. KAUTZ W. & BRANON M. *Channeling: The Intuitive Connection*. San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1987.

139. LUKOFF D. "Diagnosis of Mystical Experiences with Psychotic Features". Journal of Transpersonal Psychology 17 (1985): 155

140. MASLOW A. *Religions, Values and Peak Experiences*. Cleveland, Ohio State University Press, 1964.

141. MOODY R. *Laugh After Laugh*. New York, Lippincott, 1978.

142. PERREY J.W. *The Self in Psychotic Process*. Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1953.

143. SANELLA L. *The Kundalini Experience: Psychosis or Transcendance*. Lower Lake, California, Integral Publishing, 1987.

144. SHEEHY G. *Passages. Predictable Crises of Adult Life*. New York, E.P. Dutton, 1974.

145. STEVENSON I. *Unlearned language*. Charlottesville, VA, Univ. of Virginia Press, 1984.

146. SULLIVAN H. *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*. New York, Norton, 1953.

147. SUZUKI D.T. et al. *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*. New York, Harper Colophon, 1970.

148. TART C.H. *Transpersonal Psychologies*. Psychol. Processes. Inc. El Cerrito, CA, 1983.

149. TART C.H. *Out-of-Body Experiences*. In Psychic Explorations. New York, Putnams, 1974.

150. VALLEE J. *Dimensions: A Case Book of Alien Contact*. New York, Contemporary Books, 1988.

151. VON DURCKHEIM K.G. *The Way of Transformation*. London, George Allen & Unwin, 1971.

152. WAMBACH H. *Reliving Past Lives: the Evidence under Hypnosis*. New York, Bantam, 1978.

153. WATTS A. *Psychotherapy East and West*. New York, Ballantine Books, 1969.

154. WILBER K. *The Spectrum of Consciousness*. Wheaton, Ouest, 1977.

155. WILBER K. *The Atman Project. A Transpersonal View of Human Development.* Wheaton III., The Theosophical Publ. House, (1980).

156. WILBER K. *Eye to Eye.* New York, Doubleday/Anchor, 1983.

157. WILBER K. *System, Self, and Structure.* In preparation.

158. WILBER K. et al. *Transformations of Consciousness.* Boston, Shambhala, 1986.

Meditation and Psychology

159. BLOOMFIELD H.H. *Scientific Research on Transcendental Meditation.* vol. I, Weggis, Meru Press, 1977.

160. KORNFIELD J. M. "Intensive Insight Meditation. A Phenomenological Study". In Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 1979; II, I:41-58.

161. LAZARUS A. A. *Psychiatric Problems Precipitated by Transcendental Meditation.* Psychological Reports, 1976; 39:601-02.

162. NARANJO C. et al. *On the Psychology of Meditation.* New York, Viking, 1971.

Scientific Theories and Models Related to Psychology

163. ASHBY W.R. *An Introduction to Cybernetics.* London, Methuen, 1976.

164. FERGUSON M. *The Aquarian Conspiracy.* Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

165. FERGUSON M. The Revolution. 1973.

166. GROF S. *Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science.* New York, SUNY Press, 1984.

167. HEISENBERG W. *Physics and Philosophy. The Revolution in Modern Science.* New York, Harper, 1958.

168. KOESTLER A. *The Heel of Achilles.* 1968 (73), A. Koestler Ed.

169. PRIGOGINE I. et al. *Order Out of Chaos. Man's Dialogue with Nature.* New York, Bantam Books, 1984.

170. SHELDRAKE R. *A New Science of Life.* London, Blond and Briggs, 1981.

171. VON BERTALANFFY L. *General System Theory.* New York, G. Braziller, 1968.

172. WILBER K. *The Holographic Paradigm and Other Paradoxes.* Boulder & London, Shambhala Publications, 1983.

WESTERN PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES RELATED TO PSYCHOLOGY

173. HEIDEGGER M. *Being and Time*. New York, Harper & Row, 1962.

174. HUXLEY A. *The Perennial Philosophy*. New York, Harper & Row, 1944.

175. KIERKEGAARD S. *Fear and Trembling and the Sickness unto Death*. New York, Doubleday/Anchor, 1953.

176. RUSSEL B. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1945.

177. WHITEHEAD A.N. *Modes of Thought*. New York, MacMillan, 1966.

178. WHITEHEAD A.N. et al. *Principia Mathematica*. London, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1967.

179. WITTGENSTEIN L. *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*. London, Routledge & Keagan Paul, 1969.

ESOTERICISM AND GNOSIS

180. GUENON R . *Man and His Becoming According to Vedanta*. London, Luzac, 1975.

181. SCHUON F. *Logic and Transcendence*. New York, Harper & Row, 1975.

182. COOMARASWAMY A.K. *Time and Eternity*. Ascona, Artibus Asial, 1947.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY

183. ASSAGIOLI R. *Spiritual Development and Neuro-psychological Troubles*. Psychosomatesis Res.Found, Greenville USA, 1960.

184. BENNETT J.G. *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*. New York, Harper & Row, 1974.

185. FOWLER J.W. *Stages of Faith. The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1981.

186. GOVINOLA L. *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy*. New York, Samuel Weiser, 1974.

187. GURDJIEFF G.I. *All and Everything: Beelzebub's Tales To His Grandson*. New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1950.

188. KALFF M. "The Negation of Ego in Tibetan Buddhism and Jungian Psychology". In Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 1983,15;2:103-24.

189. MASLOW A.H. *Religions Values and Peak Experiences*. New York, Viking Compass Books, 1970.

190. MASLOW A.H. "Critique of Self Actualization". Journal of Individual Psychology, 1959,-15:24-32.

191. NISHADA K. *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness.* Honolulu, East-West Center Press, 1958.

192. NOVAK M. *The Experience of Nothingness*. New York, Harper & Row, 1971.

193. PECK S. *The Road Less Traveled.* New York, Simon & Schuster, 1978.

194. RIZZUTO A. *The Birth of the Living God.* Chicago, Univ. Chicago Press, 1979.

195. TRUNGPA C. *The Myth of Freedom.* Berkeley, Shambhala, 1976.

196. TRUNGPA C. *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism.* A Pallet Book, Shambhala, 1987.

197. WEISS B. *Many Lives, Many Masters*. A Fireside Book, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1988.

198. YOGESHWARAND S. *Science of Soul India.* Yoga Niketan, 1972.

About the Author

Ferdinand Wulliemier was born in 1942 in Lausanne, Switzerland. He was trained in psychoanalysis according to the classical Freudian tradition, undergoing analysis himself as part of his medical preparation at Lausanne University in 1979, where he now teaches pre- and post-graduate courses to students and to general practitioners, psychologists, and psychiatrists, training them in a holistic, transpersonal approach to their various therapeutic practices. His teaching, however, is secondary to his private practice, in which he has worked with a variety of patients for the past twenty-five years.

"Wu-li," as his Master affectionately calls him, views the course of his life as a slow yet progressive approach to the Divine. He has, for example, taken part in mountain-climbing expeditions and desert journeys, yet in these outward adventures, he sought in essence only some kind of inner purity. He also visited archeological sites in the Middle East, Europe, Mexico, South America, and Egypt — yet in these posts, as in his psychological inquiries, he was always searching for the Origin. This same search eventually led him from his youthful participation in the Neo-Apostolic Church to Zazen meditation, Taoist practices, and ultimately, in December of 1987, to Sahaj Marg.

The author was made a preceptor of Shri Ram Chandra Mission in October 1988, and two years later became a faculty member of the Sahaj Marg Research Institute of Hyderabad, which provided him with the opportunity to interact intensively with his Master, Shri P. Rajagopalachari. His life is now an adventure in un-becoming, guided by the one he considers the Real therapist.

ISBN 0-945242-33-6